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Europe and Islam: Crescent Waxing, Cultures Clashing

As it has historically, the world of Islam may do more to define and shape Europe in the twenty-first century than the United States, Russia, or even the European Union.[1] The Islamic challenge that Europe faces today is twofold. Internally, Europe must integrate a ghettoized but rapidly growing Muslim minority that many Europeans view as encroaching upon the collective identity and public values of European society. Externally, Europe needs to devise a viable approach to the primarily Muslim-populated volatile states, stretching from Casablanca to the Caucasus, that are a central focus of the EU's recently adopted security strategy "A Secure Europe in a Better World"[2] and its nascent "Wider Europe—New Neighborhood" initiative. Recognizing that "the Union's capacity to provide security, stability, and sustainable development to its citizens will no longer be distinguishable from its interest in close cooperation with the neighbors," the New Neighborhood initiative seeks to define a new framework for relations with 14 states or entities—Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, and Russia—and their 385 million inhabitants now along the EU's eastern and southern borders following its May 1 enlargement.[3] The Muslim factor is adding contours to Europe's domestic and foreign policy landscape in more than just demographic and geographical terms. The European-Islamic nexus is spinning off a variety of new phenomena, including the rise of terrorism; the emergence of a new anti-Semitism; the shift of established European political parties to the right; the recalibration of European national political

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calculations; additional complications for achieving an ever closer EU; and a refocusing, if not a reformulation, of European foreign policy.

Novel and dynamic but still inchoate, Europe's reencounter with Islam in both its domestic and foreign dimensions offers a range of opportunities for positive change in the world. Yet, Europe's track record of engagement with Islam over the last 1,350 years is not encouraging. Although exploring some new initiatives, Europeans today seem inclined to pursue a status quo approach at home and abroad, preferring caution, predictability, control, and established structures over the boldness, adaptability, engagement, and redefined relationships that the new situation requires. A similar mind-set is evident among Europe's Muslim population.

If accommodation is not reached, current dynamics will likely yield a Europe that not only faces increased social strife, national retrenchment, and even civil conflict domestically but also could well succumb to a "Fortress Europe" posture and decline on the international stage. The situation has not deteriorated to this point yet, but the tipping point[4] may be closer than is generally realized.

Demographic Dynamics

Few European states have gathered comprehensive data on the number and nature of the Muslim presence within their national borders. A number of states in Europe, notably Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, and Spain, actually bar questions on religion in censuses and other official questionnaires, as does the United States. Thirteen countries still do not recognize Islam as a religion, even though it is at least the second-largest religion in 16 of 37 European countries (including the Baltic states but not including the other former Soviet republics or Turkey). In many countries, Muslims are an unrecognized minority, excluded from most minority rights safeguards and protection against discrimination because they do not fit national definitions of minorities that are based primarily on ethnic and racial criteria.

More than 23 million Muslims reside in Europe, comprising nearly 5 percent of the population, according to data compiled in the U.S. Department of State's *Annual Report on International Religious Freedom 2003* (see table 1). This number is significantly larger than the estimated 13–18 million typically cited by the media or in academic studies, which are based on dated and often incomplete information. When Turkey is included, the figures balloon to 90 million and 15 percent, respectively. More important than the current numbers, however, is the trend that is emerging. The Muslim population more than doubled in the last three decades, and the rate of growth is accelerating.

Table I: Muslims in Europe

Country Grouping	Number of Muslims[1]		Percent of Total Population[1]	
	1982	2003	1982	2003
EU-15	6.8 mil.	15.2 mil.	1.9	4.0
New EU Members	208,000	290,000	0.4	0.4
EU-15 plus New EU Members	7.0 mil.	15.5 mil.	1.6	3.4
Other European States (incl. Turkey)	56.0 mil.	74.8 mil.	50.0	56.0
Other European States (not Turkey)	8.8 mil.	7.7 mil.	14.0	10.0
All European States (incl. Turkey)	62.9 mil.	90.3 mil.	11.6	15.0
All European States (not incl. Turkey)	15.6 mil.	23.2 mil.	3.2	4.5

Note:

1. Current numbers from U.S. Department of State, *Annual Report on International Religious Freedom 2003*; 1982 estimates in brackets for comparison, from M. Ali Kettani, *Muslim Minorities in the World Today* (London: Mansell Publishing Ltd., 1986).

Most European countries closed their doors to labor immigration in the 1970s, following the first Arab oil embargo and the subsequent economic downturn, yet some 500,000 immigrants—primarily family reunification cases—and 400,000 asylum seekers arrive in western Europe each year. According to the International Organization for Migration, Muslims make up a large and increasing proportion of both groups, coming primarily from Algeria, Morocco, Turkey, and the former Yugoslavia.[5] Muslims probably also make up a significant proportion of western Europe's illegal immigrants (between 120,000 and 500,000 enter the EU annually).[6] Indeed, in a number of European countries, the words "Muslim" and "immigrant" are virtually synonymous.

Currently, the waves of immigrants and asylum seekers from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)—the region with the world's second-highest fertility rate—have had more to do with the worsening conditions in the MENA countries than with labor shortages in Europe, the region with the world's lowest fertility rate. As the MENA population doubles in the next three decades and Europe's shrinks, increased migratory flows from south to north appear unavoidable—a trend augmented by Europe's graying population, as opposed to the youthful MENA average. In 2000 the UN projected that, to counterbalance their increasingly graying populations, EU states annually would need 949,000 migrants to maintain their 1995 populations; 1,588,000 migrants to maintain their 1995 working-age populations; or 13,480,000 migrants to maintain their population support ratios (the ratio of people aged 15–64 to those aged 65 and older).[7] Furthermore, rather

than help alleviate the problem, the demographics of the 10 new EU member states increase these gaps. Whichever goal is pursued, most of these individuals will be Muslims.

Today, approximately 50 percent of Muslims in western Europe were born there.[8] More importantly, the Muslim birth rate in Europe is currently more than three times that of non-Muslims, contributing to the burgeoning numbers of Muslims in Europe.[9] As a result, Muslim communities in Europe are significantly younger than the non-Muslim population, and Europe's "Generation X" and "Millennium Generation" include considerably more Muslims than does the continent's population as a whole.[10] One-third of France's five million Muslims are under the age of 20 (compared to 21 percent of the French population as a whole); one-third of Germany's four million Muslims are under 18 (compared to 18 percent of the German population as a whole); one-third of the United Kingdom's 1.6 million Muslims are under 15 (compared to 20 percent of the British population as a whole); and one-third of Belgium's 364,000 Muslims are under 15 (compared to 18 percent of the country's population as a whole).[11]

Muslims will comprise at least 20 percent of Europe's population by 2050 (up from 5 percent today).

To date, conversion to Islam has been a minor factor in the increased Muslim presence in Europe, making up less than 1 percent of all Muslims in Europe. From this low base, however, conversions could develop as a new and potentially significant source not only of the growth of the Muslim presence in Europe but also of its voice and visibility, particularly if Islam gains official recognition, becomes more established and institutionalized in Europe, and enters a proselytizing phase.

By 2015, Europe's Muslim population is expected to double, whereas Europe's non-Muslim population is projected to fall by at least 3.5 percent.[12] Looking further ahead, conservative projections estimate that, compared to today's 5 percent, Muslims will comprise at least 20 percent of Europe's population by 2050. Some even predict that one-fourth of France's population could be Muslim by 2025 and that, if trends continue, Muslims could outnumber non-Muslims in France and perhaps in all of western Europe by mid-century.[13] Although these projections seem incredible at first glance, they may not be far off the mark. At present, more than 15 percent of the 16–25-year-old cohort in France is Muslim; in Brussels, 25 percent of the population under the age of 25 is Muslim. A factor in this equation that is as important as the dramatic increase in the Muslim population is the dra-

matic decline of the general European population, which, according to UN projections, will drop by more than 100 million from 728 million in 2000 to approximately 600 million, and possibly as low as 565 million, by 2050.[14]

Ghettoization

The growing Muslim presence in Europe has tended to cluster geographically within individual states, particularly in industrialized, urban areas within clearly defined, if not self-encapsulated, poorer neighborhoods such as Berlin's Kreuzberg district, London's Tower Hamlets, and the *banlieues* (suburbs) of major French cities, further augmenting its visibility and impact yet circumscribing day-to-day contact with the general population. Two-fifths of Muslims in the United Kingdom reside in the greater London area; one-third of Muslims in France live in or around Paris; and one-third of Muslims in Germany are concentrated in the Ruhr industrial area.[15] Muslims now constitute more than 25 percent of the population of Marseille; 20 percent of Malmo, Sweden; 15 percent of Brussels and Birmingham, as well as Paris; and 10 percent or more of London, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Oslo, and Copenhagen.[16]

The recent increase in Europe's Muslim population has occurred primarily in western Europe. In the decade following the fall of the Berlin Wall, the western European Muslim presence grew at a pace nearly six times faster than that in North America. Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden were among the states with the most dramatic immigration and asylum-driven Muslim growth in Europe in the 1990s. In the rest of this decade, Spain, Italy, and perhaps Greece—west European states with the lowest fertility rates, the oldest populations, the most porous borders, the closest proximity to countries of migration, and the highest number of illegal residents—appear destined to experience comparable increases in their Muslim populations.

The indigenous Muslim populations in southeastern Europe, by contrast, have declined by some 15 percent during the last 20 years as a result of, among other things, Turkish emigration from Bulgaria, Albanian immigration to Italy and Greece, and emigration and deaths caused by the Balkan wars. In central and eastern Europe, Muslim populations remain virtually nonexistent.

Identity

The nature of the Muslim presence in Europe is also changing. No longer "temporary guest workers," Muslims are now a permanent part of western European national landscapes, as they have been for centuries in southeast-

ern Europe. The institutionalization of Islam in Europe has begun, as has a "re-Islamization" of Muslims in Europe.

To talk of a single Muslim community in Europe, however, is misleading. Even within individual countries, ethnic diversity, sectarian differences, cleavages within communities arising from sociopolitical and generational splits, and the nonhierarchical nature of Islam itself mean that Europe's Muslims will be more divided than united for decades to come. Like European Christians and Jews, European Muslims are not a monolithic group. Nonetheless, Muslims increasingly identify first with Islam rather than with either their family's country of origin or the European country in which they now reside.[17] Moreover, this phenomenon is significantly more pronounced among younger Muslims.

The unemployment rate among Muslims is generally double that of non-Muslims.

Some ethnic barriers between Muslims are beginning to lose their significance, again especially among the young, in part also because of an emerging cohort of religious leaders who are not financed or sponsored by individual Muslim states, who use the vernacular, and who address the concerns of young European Muslims. The current generation is also modernizing and acculturating to aspects of contemporary European society at a faster rate than the first waves of Muslim immigrants did. Younger Muslims are adopting attributes of the European societies in which they were born and raised, such as language; socialization through schooling; and, in many cases, some of the secular perspectives of the country in which they reside. Yet, generally they do not feel part of the larger society nor that they have a stake in it. Conversely, even though they may be third-generation citizens, they often are not viewed as fellow citizens by the general public but are still identified as foreigners and immigrants instead.

Nevertheless, the proportion of Muslims holding European citizenship is increasing. With more Muslims being born in western Europe and with recently eased naturalization procedures in many countries, particularly in Germany, this trend will accelerate. More than three-fifths of Muslims in France and the United Kingdom are already citizens of those countries. In Germany, the proportion is only 15–20 percent; of the remainder, 11 percent have applied for citizenship and a further 48 percent plan to do so, according to a survey conducted by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in 2001.[18] These figures indicate that Germany could soon have up to 2.4 million new citizens and, significantly, potential voters. A similar surge can be expected at some point from the approximately one million Muslims currently living in Italy, where less than 10 percent have Italian citizenship.

The same is true for Spain and its estimated one million Muslims. In Scandinavia, where naturalization is generally obtainable after five years of residency, the percentage of Muslims who have citizenship can be expected to increase significantly in the near future from the current 15–30 percent levels (see table 2).

Despite these trends in citizenship, younger Muslims are resisting assimilation into secular European societies even more steadfastly than the older generation did. Europe's Muslims, including the younger generation, are willing to integrate and respect national norms and institutions as long as they can, at the same time, maintain their distinct Islamic identity and practices. They fear that assimilation, that is, total immersion into European society, will strip them of this identity. Yet, this is the price many Muslims increasingly see European governments and publics demanding: to have Europe become a melting pot without accommodation by or modifications of the existing culture. Studies in France and Germany find that second- and particularly third-generation Muslims are less integrated into European societies than their parents or grandparents were.[19] The recent headscarf affairs in France and Germany underscore and further exacerbate this basic clash.

Perceived discrimination in European societies affecting employment, education, housing, and religious practices is compelling many second- and third-generation Muslims to embrace Islam as their badge of identity. Indeed, the unemployment rate among Muslims is generally double that of non-Muslims, and it is worse than that of non-Muslim immigrants. Educational achievement and skill levels are relatively low, participation by Muslim women in the workforce is minimal, opportunities for advancement are limited, and biases against Muslims are strong. Such factors contribute to the isolation—and self-encapsulation—of Muslim communities in Europe. Thus, it is not surprising that a survey conducted in France, for example, revealed that Muslim identification with Islam was stronger in 2001 than it was in 1994 or 1989, with the number of those declaring themselves "believing and practicing" Muslims increasing by 25 percent between 1994 and 2001.[20]

Strategic Implications

Europe's reencounter with Islam is spinning off a range of developments with far-reaching implications.

Incubator for Terrorist Recruitment?

Europe's counterterrorism officials estimate that 1–2 percent of the continent's Muslims—between 250,000 and 500,000 individuals—are in-

Table 2: Muslims in the EU-15

Islam		Total No. of Muslims[2]	% of Population[2]	Muslim Citizenship		Muslims' Ethnicity/ Country of Origin
Recognized?	Rank[1]	[1982 est.]	[1982 est.]	%	No.	(% of Muslims[3])
Austria Yes (1979)	3rd	338,988 [80,000]	4.2 [1.1]	28	96,052	Turkey (50) Bosnia (25) Kosovo (10)
Belgium Yes (1974)	2nd	364,000 [350,000]	3.5 [3.6]	NK[4]	NK	Morocco (55) Turkey (33)
Denmark No	2nd	162,000 [35,000]	3.0 [0.7]	11	18,000	Turkey (27) Yugoslav (22) Lebanon (11) Pakistan (10)
Finland Yes (1980s)	4th	20,000	0.4	NK	NK	Somalia (23) Yugoslav (20) Iraq (17) Iran (11)
France Yes (2002)	2nd	5 mil. [2.5 mil.]	8.3 [4.6]	60	3 mil.	Algeria (30) Morocco (20) Turkey (10)
Germany No	3rd	4 mil. [1.8 mil.]	4.9 [2.9]	15	500,000	Turkey (68) Yugoslav
Greece Yes (1923)	2nd	450,000 [160,000]	4.1 [1.6]	22	100,000	Turkish (50) Pomak (25) Romani (15)
Ireland No	3rd	19,147	0.5	NK	NK	
Italy No	2nd	1 mil. [120,000]	1.8 [0.2]	7	70,000	Morocco (34) Albania (27) Tunisia (10)
Luxembourg No	3rd	6,000	1.4	NK	NK	Montenegro (25)
Netherlands Yes (1988)	3rd	886,000 [400,000]	5.5 [2.8]	50	450,000	Turkey (40) Morocco (34)
Portugal Yes (1976)	2nd	35,000	0.4	NK	NK	Mozambique Guinea
Spain Yes (1992)	2nd	1 mil. [120,000]	2.4 [0.3]	NK	NK	Morocco
Sweden Yes (1979)	2nd	350,000 [30,000]	3.9 [0.3]	15–30	50,000–100,000	Yugoslav (25) Iran (14) Iraq (14) Turkey (13) Bosnia (13)
UK No	3rd	1.6 mil. [1.25 mil.]	2.7 [2.2]	60	1 mil.	Pakistan (45) India (19) Bangladesh (13–16)
Total		15.2 mil. [6.8 mil.]	4.0 [1.9]			

Notes:

1. Rank among the five major religions: Catholic, Islamic, Jewish, Orthodox, and Protestant.
2. Current numbers from U.S. Department of State, *Annual Report on International Religious Freedom 2003*; 1982 estimates in brackets for comparison, from M. Ali Kettani, *Muslim Minorities in the World Today* (London: Mansell Publishing Ltd., 1986).
3. Data provided for groups greater than 10 percent; percentages provided where known.
4. NK = not known.

volved in some type of extremist activity. How many of these Muslims would actually support terrorism or commit terrorist acts is unclear. The key point is not that Europe's legal environment and location offer a convenient platform from which terrorists can operate, but that the chemistry resulting from Muslims' encounter with Europe seems to make certain individuals more susceptible to recruitment into terrorist networks.

The September 11 hijackers were not simply based in Europe; they were Arabs whose outlook had been radically transformed by their experiences in Europe. Of the approximately 660 original detainees from 42 countries held by the United States in Guantanamo, more than 20 were citizens of at least six different western European states, and perhaps a similar number were permanent residents. (By comparison, two were U.S. citizens.) The total number of Guantanamo detainees from Europe is significantly greater, statistically, than one would expect, suggesting that there may be something about the European environment that contributes to certain Muslims embracing terrorism. In this regard, Michael Radu of the Foreign Policy Research Institute has reportedly noted that, since September 11, 2001, European countries have arrested 20 times more terrorism suspects than the United States.[21]

Some experience a sort of culture shock in Europe and become radicalized Islamists.

According to German and French experts, only a minority of European Islamist terrorists had been passionate fanatics in their Muslim home countries prior to coming to Europe.[22] A larger group of terrorists by far is recruited from the masses of young men, many of them middle-class, who experience a sort of culture shock in Europe and become radicalized, "born-again" Islamists. Not accepted as an integral part of European society and at the same time repulsed by its secularism and materialism, a few individuals with a Muslim background, especially when confronted by a significant personal crisis, apparently find solidarity, meaning, and direction in radical Islamist groups that are actively looking for such recruits.

Few radicalized Muslims in Europe return to their families' homelands to take up the fight. Rather, these young men embark on a jihad in places such as Afghanistan, Bosnia, or Chechnya; some do so in the West. As the French expert Olivier Roy has observed, the sociological background of western Europe's violent Islamic militants fits a pattern common to most of the western European radical leftists of the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., Germany's Rote Armee Faktion, Italy's Brigatta Rosso, and France's Action Directe).[23] The cells tend to be amalgams of disaffected, European-educated, single

males (often with university-level technical or scientific training) and working-class dropouts (including jailhouse converts) who share a common, marginal culture. Their backgrounds have nothing to do with Islamist struggles against specific Middle Eastern governments or, except for the Saudis and the Yemenis, traditional religious education. Nor are these militants or the cells to which they belong linked to any Middle Eastern state intelligence services or radical movements. Rather, the recruits seem to be simple foot soldiers controlled and directed by Islamist groups, pursuing their own global agenda.

A New Type of Anti-Semitism

In France, which has Europe's largest Jewish and Muslim populations, there is concern about the sixfold increase in acts of violence against Jewish property and persons in 2002 as compared with 2001.[24] According to a recent statement by Israeli minister Natan Sharansky, the number of anti-Semitic incidents in France rose from 77 in 2002 to 141 in 2003, accounting for 47 percent of all anti-Semitic attacks in western Europe.[25] Accompanying this violence, emigration by French Jews to Israel doubled between 2001 and 2002—to the largest number since 1972.[26] According to figures released by the Israeli government in late January 2004, 2,380 French Jews emigrated to Israel in 2003, and 2,556 emigrated in 2002, as compared to the 1990s, when approximately 800 French Jews emigrated to Israel each year. Also significant, the majority of emigrants are reportedly between the age of 16 and 25.[27]

Many of the more frequent anti-Semitic incidents in France and elsewhere in Europe are linked mostly to Arab Muslims who are channeling growing frustration over their own and fellow Muslims' social and economic disenfranchisement at Israel's handling of the Palestinian Intifada, as well as to a few young Muslims who are displacing this anger onto another immigrant minority group whose own place in European society has been frequently questioned.[28] This is a development that France's minister of education, Luc Ferry, has called "a real danger—all the greater because today's anti-Semitism is of a new type, coming from parts of society that are more 'acceptable' than the extreme right: from Arabs and Muslims."[29]

In January 2003, the German government banned the radical Islamist organization Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT) for propagating anti-Semitism in Germany and urging violence against German Jews. HuT maintained at least some ties with the neo-Nazi National Party of Germany, which participated in an anti-U.S./anti-Israeli HuT demonstration in Berlin in October 2002. Recent developments in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, and the United Kingdom have also made European governments sensitive to this new source and type of

Table 3: Muslims in New EU Member States

Islam		Total No. of Muslims[2]	% of Population[2]	Muslim Citizenship		Muslims' Ethnicity/ Country of Origin
Recognized?	Rank[1]	[1982 est.]	[1982 est.]	%	No.	(% of Muslims[3])
Cyprus Yes	2nd	200,000 [155,000]	26.0 [24.4]	100	200,000	Turkish Cypriot/ Turkey
Czech Rep. No	4th	20,000–30,000	0.2–0.3	NK[4]	NK	
Estonia Yes	5th	<6,000	0.4	NK	NK	Tatar
Hungary No	5th	NK	<0.1	NK	NK	
Latvia Yes	5th	300	<0.1	NK	NK	Tatar
Lithuania Yes	5th	2,700	0.1	NK	NK	Tatar
Malta No	3rd	3,000	0.8	25	750	
Poland No	4th	5,123 [22,000]	<0.1 [<0.1]	NK	NK	Tatar
Slovakia No	5th	<5,000	<0.1	NK	NK	
Slovenia Yes	4th	47,488 [20,000]	2.4 [1.1]	NK	NK	Bosnian
Total		290,000 [208,000]	0.4 [0.4]			

Notes:

1. Rank among the five major religions: Catholic, Islamic, Jewish, Orthodox, and Protestant.
2. Current numbers from U.S. Department of State, *Annual Report on International Religious Freedom 2003*; 1982 estimates in brackets for comparison, from M. Ali Kettani, *Muslim Minorities in the World Today* (London: Mansell Publishing Ltd., 1986).
3. Data provided for groups greater than 10 percent.
4. NK = not known.

anti-Semitism, including its possible exploitation by extremist organizations of the Left as well as the Right.

Political Shift to the Right

In the last decade, the growth and visibility of Europe's Muslim population have also given new life to radical right-wing parties, which have played on xenophobia and popular fears of Islam. Just as important, advances by parties of the far Right (e.g., Belgium's Flemish Bloc, the British National Party, Denmark's People's Party, Jean-Marie Le Pen's French National Front, Italy's Northern League, and Switzerland's People's Party) have led to right-leaning adjustments in the political priorities of mainstream parties. In a number of cases (Austria, Denmark, Italy, Norway, and Switzerland, as well as the previous government of the Netherlands), European coalition or minority gov-

ernments depend on the support of right-wing parties with pronounced anti-Muslim views to remain in office. This rightward shift has been most evident in actions to restrict immigration and an increased emphasis on national interests in EU policy debates, but it is also reflected in recent moves such as those in France and Germany to ban the wearing of the Muslim headscarf in public schools and by the Netherlands to expel up to 26,000 asylum seekers.

The increasing Muslim presence has reopened debates on Europe's very identity.

The kind of impact that a fast-growing Muslim citizenry will have on national politics in European states remains to be seen. To date, Europe's Muslims have not engaged broadly in European party politics, although a few political steps have been taken, such as mobilization during the September 2003 by-elections to defeat British Labour Party members of Parliament who backed the war in Iraq.[30]

In general, however, political activism among Muslims to date has been rather limited. In France, where 92 percent of adult citizens have registered to vote, the corresponding figure among Muslim citizens is only 37 percent.[31] In a March 2004 poll, nearly half of surveyed Muslims in the United Kingdom claimed that, in the next general election, they would not vote.[32] Although Muslims in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in Europe generally express a basic degree of confidence in national institutions (e.g., judiciary, legislature, political parties, armed forces), they seem inclined to remain disconnected politically, giving priority to apolitical concerns (e.g., family, faith, and honor) over engagement with larger, organized structures. With the exceptions of Belgium and the Netherlands, Muslims are greatly underrepresented, and in many cases unrepresented, in European national parliaments and governments, as they are in the United States.

As mainly first- and second-generation immigrants, Muslims who do vote have tended to lean strongly toward the social welfare and assistance programs of left-of-center parties; for example, 85 percent of the Muslim vote in the United Kingdom went to the Labour Party in the 1997 elections. A few European political analysts, however, recently have detected a possible shift in some Muslim quarters toward center and right-of-center parties, with some Muslims apparently beginning to identify more with conservative values on family, social, and moral issues, as well as entrepreneurship.[33]

For the immediate future, there is likely to be an inclination by right-of-center parties to play the "Muslim card" in certain contexts, particularly as an aging and dwindling European population worries about the influx of foreigners, a strained welfare system, and constant reminders of the threats of terrorism.

Table 4: Muslims in Other European States (Non-EU)

Islam		Total No. of Muslims[2]	% of Population[2]	Muslim Citizenship		Muslims' Ethnicity/ Country of Origin
Recognized?	Rank[1]	[1982 est.]	[1982 est.]	%	No.	(% of Muslims[3])
Albania Yes	1st	2.15 mil. [2.11 mil.]	70.0 [75.0]	100	2.15 mil.	Albanian
Bosnia No	1st	1.52 mil. [2.13 mil.]	40.0 [51.6]	100	1.52 mil.	Bosnian
Bulgaria Yes	2nd	963,800 [1.7 mil.]	12.2 [19.3]	100	963,800	Turkish (75) Pomak (20) Tatar
Croatia Yes	3rd	44,370 [150,000]	1.0 [3.3]	100	44,370	Bosnian
Iceland Yes	3rd	229	<0.1	NK[5]	NK	
Liechtenstein Yes	3rd	1347	4.0	NK	NK	
Macedonia Yes	2nd	600,000 [600,000]	30.0 [31.4]	100	600,000	Albanian
Norway Yes	2nd	68,899 [12,000]	1.5 [0.4]	15–30	10,000–20,000	Pakistan (31) Bosnia (17) Turkey (13) Iraq (11) Iran (11) Somalia (11)
Romania Yes	4th	67,257 [65,000]	0.3 [0.3]	100	67,257	Turkish Tatar
Serb-Mont. Yes	2nd	2.02 mil.[4] [1.93 mil.]	19.0 [19.7]	100	2.02 mil.	Albanian Bosnian
Switzerland No	3rd	310,807 [70,000]	4.3 [1.1]	10	36,481	Turkey (43) Yugoslav (36)
Turkey Yes	1st	67.1 mil. [46.9 mil.]	99.0 [99.0]	100	67.1 mil.	Turkish/ Kurdish
Total		74.8 mil. [56.0 mil.]	56.0 [50.0]			
Total without Turkey		7.7 mil. [8.8 mil.]	10.0 [14.0]			

Notes:

1. Rank among the five major religions: Catholic, Islamic, Jewish, Orthodox, and Protestant.
2. Current numbers from U.S. Department of State, *Annual Report on International Religious Freedom 2003*; 1982 estimates in brackets for comparison, from M. Ali Kettani, *Muslim Minorities in the World Today* (London: Mansell Publishing Ltd., 1986).
3. Data provided for groups greater than 10 percent; percentages provided where known.
4. Total for Serbia-Montenegro includes Kosovo.
5. NK = not known.

Some observers have suggested that the European Right should actively pursue the Muslim vote, just as Republicans are now courting the Hispanic vote in the United States.[34] The existence of far-right parties in Europe, however, probably precludes such a strategy, for far-right parties offer an alternative home for that portion of the center-right's base that would oppose Muslim incorporation.

For their part, Muslim voters in the future will probably play a greater, albeit localized political role. Attempts at forming Islamic parties in Europe have failed. Over the long term, it is likely that the Muslim voter, similar to individual Christian and Jewish voters in Europe today, will choose his or her party affiliation on the basis of personal interests and status, not religious identification. Still, where specific political issues touch on deeply felt religious briefs and practices, the Muslim citizen, as his or her Christian and Jewish counterpart, may become a swing voter. Engagement in the political process offers a path for Muslims to achieve the goal of integrating into European society, while maintaining their distinct Islamic identity.

National Political Calculations

European politicians are beginning routinely to interject calculations of the "Muslim factor"—the impact of Europe's growing Muslim population at the ballot box as well as on the Muslim street—into their decisionmaking processes. This consideration played a significant role in President Jacques Chirac's stance on Iraq and probably also factored into Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's calculus. Although peaceful protest as well as violence (including terrorism) are the immediate concerns, European politicians are also sensitive to the geographical clustering of actual and potential Muslim voters, specifically their significant presence in blue-collar, traditionally left-of-center districts.

Politicians must also be aware of the potentially far-reaching consequences should Muslims start to vote in larger numbers and shift to voting for center and right-of-center parties. This consideration does not apply solely to France and Germany. In the United Kingdom, the Labour Party's margin of victory for seven seats in the House of Commons in the 2002 elections was less than the Muslim population in those districts.[35] This, for example, may have played a role in British support of Pakistan's draft UN Security Council resolution on protecting cultural monuments during the 2003 war in Iraq, particularly given Foreign Secretary Jack Straw's Blackburn constituency, which has the third-largest proportion of Muslims in the United Kingdom (nearly 20 percent).

Complicating Attempts to Form a Closer EU

As the EU seeks to move forward on its agenda of broadening and deepening Europe, the world of Islam poses complications on various fronts. The ongoing debate on whether to mention Christianity in the EU's draft constitution is one example, as is the perennial issue of Turkey's membership. The increasing Muslim presence in Europe has reopened debates on several issues: the place of religion in public life, social tolerance in Europe, secular-

ism as the only path to modernity, and Europe's very identity. The Muslim factor has also highlighted a potential contradiction in the nature of the union itself, namely that the EU is still primarily a common market with arguably a social as well as a democracy deficit.[36] Finally, former EU official Fraser Cameron has noted that, thus far, Muslims in Europe have not tried to affect EU foreign policy but this "could change in the future."[37]

The dynamics unleashed by the process of European integration coupled with the forces of globalization, Europe's demographic decline, and its economic doldrums are generating wrenching identity-related tensions for many Europeans. The impact of the burgeoning Muslim presence on individual European societies as well as their collective identity is further exacerbating European anxiety by adding nationalist—albeit muted—and xenophobic overtones to the discourse. Some Scandinavian analysts have attributed the negative Danish votes in 1992 and 2000 and the near-negative votes in 1993 on referenda on the Maastricht Treaty and EU monetary union partly to this climate, which has fostered a degree of renationalization in European politics.[38] EU integration and Muslim integration, though vastly different issues (at least on the surface), seem to strike a common, sensitive nerve among many Europeans, reflecting growing concerns with such core issues as control and identity.

> In the near term, the impact may be most visible on the foreign policy stage.

Refocusing Foreign Policy

Over time, the political salience of the Muslim factor in Europe will be most evident in the domestic realm. In large measure, the influence of Muslims on European societies will be a function of whether and when Muslims get involved in the electoral process on a significant scale, how political parties will include Muslims in day-to-day political life, what economic role they will play, and what degree of social mobility they will achieve. In the near term, however, the impact of the Muslim factor may be most visible on the foreign policy stage for at least three reasons.

First, as a group, Europe's Muslims are energized more quickly and forcefully by developments in the international arena, notably those in which the *umma* (universal Muslim community) is viewed as endangered and the *dar al-Islam* (abode of peace, or Islamic territory) is involved, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the crises in Iraq and Bosnia, than by domestic issues, such as employment and education. For example, the Muslim Association of Britain and the Stop the War Coalition jointly sponsored the mid-Febru-

ary 2003 demonstration in London involving an estimated one million persons—the largest protest in British history—under the dual banners "Don't Attack Iraq" and "Freedom for Palestine."

Second, for governments and politicians, in cost-benefit terms it is generally easier to respond to Muslims' concerns about foreign policy than to those about domestic matters, given both the generally limited political and financial resources required and the views of their non-Muslim constituencies. Those constituencies may ignore or sympathize with international causes but view specific, domestic benefits for Muslims as coming at their expense.

Third, Europe has many Muslim neighbors, and its foreign and national security policies are necessarily defined in good measure by its Islamic "near abroad," as the EU's New Neighborhood initiative explicitly acknowledges. Growing unrest in the adjacent Islamic world, which also resonates among Europe's own Muslim minorities; concerns about unwanted immigrants, Islamic fundamentalist terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction emanating from the region; as well as energy dependence all make stability in the "crescent of crisis" a priority for Europeans.[39]

Europe's Risky Stability Strategy

European states have a widespread aversion to supporting change that has uncertain and potentially destabilizing consequences in Europe's immediate neighborhood in North Africa, the Middle East, and the Caucasus, even when the governments involved are recognized as corrupt and oppressive. As part of its strategy for dealing with this situation, European governments have sought to cultivate ties with existing regimes, at times propping them up at great cost to seek their assistance to staunch the unregulated flow of immigrants into Europe and to quarantine the Islamic fundamentalist contagion.

The EU, along with non-EU European states, would prefer to see stronger economies operating with greater transparency and under better governance along Europe's periphery. Yet, in contrast to its readiness to use the prospect of EU membership to foster economic, democratic, and human rights change in central and eastern Europe, Brussels has to date been unwilling to exercise the leverage afforded by its Euro-Mediterranean partnership to encourage reform along Europe's Muslim edge. The partnership is a potentially potent tool, with an annual budget from its inception in 1995 through 2006 of nearly one billion euros plus nearly three times that amount available via loans from the European Investment Bank. This is more than half of the funds earmarked for the 10 new central and eastern European members of the EU during the same period. The Euro-Med program, however, does not demand fulfillment of political and human rights requirements by its Mediterranean partners, such as

those spelled out in the Copenhagen Criteria for new EU members, in exchange for this financial, trade, and developmental assistance.

In May 2003, British foreign secretary Straw acknowledged this shortcoming, stating that "there is a pressing need to develop a stronger relationship with the Muslim world. I hope Europe will refocus its programmes, including Euro-Med, to work in partnership with North Africa on issues that really matter: good governance, the rule of law, and transfer of expertise."[40] It remains to be seen whether the EU's nascent New Neighborhood initiative will move decisively in this direction and become the platform for a common, inclusive approach with the United States toward the greater Middle East.[41]

Current European strategy hinders the development of a modern Euro-Islamic identity.

In domestic policy, Europe's quest for stability is manifest in European governments' attempts during the last decade to manage their Muslim populations by effectively nationalizing, if not secularizing, Islam. These governments are trying to foster nationally oriented Islams subordinate to the state as well as to established European norms stretching back to the Treaty of Westphalia, the Enlightenment, and Napoleonic rule that were developed in different times, for different religions, in very different environments. By nationalizing Islam and putting it squarely within existing structures in the tradition of state churches, governments are seeking to contain a sensitive issue on familiar ground, maintaining the leverage established structures afford.

These efforts favor certain Muslim groups over others; seek to educate imams locally, require them to speak the vernacular, and understand the local culture; facilitate construction of mosques and religious instruction in the hopes of reducing Arab state financing and influence; restrict wearing the *hijab* (Islamic head scarf); and virtually shoehorn Muslim organizations into structures that correspond to national criteria and objectives, such as Belgium's Central Body for the Islamic Religion, Germany's Central Council of Muslims, and the French Council of the Muslim Religion. In all too many cases, state-established Muslim councils have failed the tests of fair and equal treatment and are not truly representative. States have excluded certain Muslim groups, predetermined and/or selected-out individual representatives, and taken a "one size fits all" approach that fails to take into account the diversity and variety of the Muslim communities in most European states, including their sectarian differences, the inherently nonhierarchical nature of Islam, and other functional and structural differences from Christian religions.

The problem with this approach is that, although it ostensibly puts Islam on the same plane as traditional European religions, it fails to integrate Muslims into European society. This outcome is not all that surprising, given that the governmental goals are primarily control and regulation, not outreach and accommodation. To date, not a single national Islamic council created by a European state has become an effective interlocutor with the government, facilitating a fruitful two-way dialogue. Most have foundered. The attempt to promote a nationally oriented Islam artificially, however, may accentuate the trend toward Muslim alienation, prompting further movement toward communalism. By promoting the establishment of private Islamic schools or by deliberately excluding or failing to foster structures that permit the full range of Muslim sectarian groups to have a voice in the dialogue and by prompting a search for channels and associations outside of the state's purview or direction, devoid of attachments to Europe, European governments further segregate Muslim communities, limiting the possibilities for engagement with the broader society.

Muslims tend to seek integration but not assimilation into Europe.

For their part, Europe's Muslims have a tendency to move in a similar direction, reinforced by the statist approach of trying to nationalize Islam, in Europe or elsewhere. Roy has described this path as "recommunalization along supranational lines, which is defined in essence by European Muslims' identification with a universal umma, or community of the faithful. … It is with this … phenomenon that radicalism and violence become potentially serious issues."[42]

Attempts to nationalize and secularize Islam, moreover, hinder the development of a modern Euro-Islamic identity that amalgamates Western culture with Islamic orthopraxy, parallel to the distinct Arab Islamic, South Asian–Islamic, and East Asian–Islamic cultures and identities that have emerged elsewhere in the world. The Arab Islamic culture has most profoundly shaped the practices of Muslims in continental Europe, but much of this influence derives from Arab customs and traditions, not Islamic orthopraxy. Although not surprising given the origins of most of Europe's Muslims, this development in a sense represents a form of reverse Arab colonialism in Europe. The development of a parallel Euro-Islamic model[43] could provide a framework for Muslims to make the adjustments necessary to integrate into European society while maintaining their Islamic identity and for European societies to make appropriate accommodations and adaptations to encompass a growing segment of Europe's citizenry.

Islamophobia and Europhobia

Ironically, 1989 saw the acceleration of European integration, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, and rising tensions with the Muslim world, over the Salman Rushdie affair in the United Kingdom and the initial hijab controversy in France. Since that time, a series of events have polarized popular attitudes toward Europe's Muslim communities and galvanized Islamic identity within them. Europe's Muslim population is now more than merely an immigration issue. Increasingly, the Muslim presence in Europe has become a challenge to domestic social unity; *The Economist* has warned that this "could be a huge long-term threat to Europe."[44]

As they publicly advocate integration, many Europeans and Muslims in Europe remain convinced that their respective values are not only incompatible with each other but also that the other's values directly challenge their own identity. These perceptions thus perpetuate each group's separate existence within Europe. Although many European Muslims are open to a milder form of integration, overwhelming majorities of Muslims in France, the United Kingdom, and Germany resist assimilation, preferring to be a part of Europe while maintaining their own Islamic identity. If anything, the trend toward Muslim differentiation and alienation appears to be growing stronger, with the younger generation in the vanguard. In a 2003 Ipsos poll, for example, three-fourths of French Muslim respondents considered the values of Islam to be compatible with those of the French Republic, but only one-fourth of those under 25 shared that view.[45] Conversely, an Ipsos poll conducted around the same time indicated that 62 percent of the general French population believed that the values of Islam were not compatible with those of the French Republic.[46]

In a 2002 survey conducted in Germany, 19 percent of respondents said that Muslims should not be allowed to practice their religion in Germany, 43 percent voiced doubts about Islam's capacity to be tolerant, and 67 percent said that, when practicing their religion, Muslims should be more respectful of the views of the German public.[47] According to the 2000 European Values Survey, in comparison with people of a different race, immigrants, and Jews, Muslims are the societal group that Europeans least want as a neighbor and, in some cases, by significant margins.

The rapidly growing Muslim populations seem to be overwhelming the ability of European governments to draw the lines of tolerance rationally, consistently, and convincingly. Europeans see Muslims as a direct challenge to the collective identity, traditional values, and public policies of their societies, as demonstrated by the heated controversies over the hijab, Muslim food (*halal*), the construction of mosques, the teaching of Islam in schools, and Muslim burial rites. This attitude is also reflected in intense debates

over women's rights, church-state relations, and Islam's compatibility with democracy. Politicians, pundits, and ordinary citizens are all seized with the "Islamic challenge."

The fact that European governments and publics tend to view and respond to all Muslims as an undifferentiated whole further reinforces the tendency among Europeans to see the Muslim presence not as a potential boon but as a real threat, which, in some respects, becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. The threat is framed in terms of security (terrorism) and economics (jobs); yet, the core issue is identity and the perceived cultural threat Islam poses to the European way of life. Europeans have even coined a name for it: Islamophobia. Conversely, this tendency to see Muslims as a monolith has its reverse image in Muslim allegiance to the umma, which transcends other loyalties; tends to reinforce the "we/them" perspective; and is part of the reason why Muslims resist assimilation—the total loss of identity-related indicators of existing differences from European societies—and insist on integration—a reconstituted identity that stresses remaining differences—or, in some cases, recommunalization—a physical presence in Europe but no accommodation with European society. In other words, Muslims tend to seek a physical presence in Europe but no accommodation with European society.[48]

Whether Europe will be transformed and strengthened or torn apart is an open question.

Although Europeans, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, are divided on how to handle this new Islamic challenge, the dynamics of the situation argue that both Muslim and non-Muslim Europeans will need to undergo, individually and jointly, a wrenching, far-reaching, and probably prolonged adjustment in mind-set to avoid a spiral of future clashes. Whether Europe will be transformed and strengthened or torn apart is still an open question. In many ways, the process of integration in Europe ahead is akin to what a generation of Americans, black and white, experienced during the civil rights movement in the United States 50 years ago, following the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. Yet in other ways, the challenge for Europe seems more daunting because it involves not only integration and tolerance but also redefining both parties' identities. Each side will have to change and move toward the other. Europe's Muslims will need to accept the norms, customs, and cultures of the states in which they live and reject efforts to establish a parallel society, while the general European population will need to broaden its horizons to embrace and accommodate diversity, accepting integration and not just complete assimilation as a valid relationship to society.

The centuries-old question of whether Europe and Islam can coexist will have to be confronted. In the estimates of some, Europe is entering a period of demographic,[49] economic,[50] psychological, and political decline, which will make it all the more difficult to address the additional challenges of integration, tolerance, and identity posed by Europe's Muslim population.

For their part, Muslims in Europe, who must confront poverty, bigotry, de facto segregation, and limited social mobility, are likely to find it difficult to embrace Europe's liberal democratic views on gender equality; sexual liberalization; and the principles of compromise, egalitarianism, and identification with the state. These are all issues that challenge the traditional views not only of Muslims but also of individuals with an Arab, Turkish, or South Asian heritage, as the vast majority of Europe's Muslims are. These cultural backgrounds have not included the Enlightenment as a central pillar, and the idea of a secular society is for the most part alien. Moreover, as Mustafa Malik notes, in these societies, "[R]esistance to liberalism was heightened by hatred for European colonialists, who represented liberal values."[51] Lack of organization and political standing, diversity of views and interests, economic weakness, and the absence of clear leadership pose major complicating hurdles, all of which Europe's Muslims will need to address if they are to contribute their part to Europe's transformation.

Approaching a Tipping Point?

Changing minds on questions of identity is no small task. Yet, the alternative—entrenchment of such conflicting perspectives—sets a clear course for conflict. If Europe and its Muslim communities fail to reach an accommodation, increased social strife, national retrenchment, and potentially significant civil conflict are likely to overwhelm the vision of a continent that is whole, free, and united.

Although the situation in Europe is not quite there, the tipping point may be closer than is generally realized. As intolerance toward Muslim communities grows in Europe, European Muslims are growing more self-confident but also more dissatisfied, particularly as Europe's economy continues to sputter. The percentage of Muslims in France is rapidly approaching that of African-Americans in the United States in 1950 (10 percent), and the percentage of Muslims in Europe as a whole will pass that benchmark within the next decade. Muslim and non-Muslim moderates participating in the Euro-Islamic dialogue are being squeezed and marginalized, with core issues and representative standpoints being distorted. Alarm bells are being set off in various quarters, highlighting and reinforcing the extremes on both sides.

Increasingly, public attention is focusing on polarizing statements such as the finding of the French commission, which recommended that the Islamic head scarf be banned in public primary and secondary schools and declared that the secular state was under "guerrilla assault" by Muslims. Commission Chairman Bernard Stasi even warned that "forces in France … are trying to destabilize the republic, and it's time for the republic to react."[52] Meanwhile, the Middle East editor of the influential German nationwide daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* depicts the situation as "frightening," questions the prospects of integrating Germany's growing Muslim population into society, and maintains that at least 10 percent of Germany's Muslim population—400,000 individuals—are followers and supporters of radical Islam, whose aim is the establishment of an Islamic state.[53]

Such views are not isolated. They reflect many Europeans' tacit and widespread fear of the inevitability of social conflict stemming from the burgeoning Muslim population; the Muslims' demands for more control, greater entitlements, and preservation of their Islamic identity; and Europe's ongoing struggle with a multicultural identity that most members of the middle and upper classes resent. These fears are not new but rather deeply ingrained and growing.

Following the fall of the Berlin Wall, an older, revived version of the Muslim threat at home and abroad seems to have replaced the Communist threat in Europe. Indeed, during his brief tenure as NATO secretary general in the mid-1990s, Belgian Willy Claes claimed that the new threat to the alliance was Islam.[54] Thus, it is not surprising that Samuel P. Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* had and continues to have far greater resonance in Europe than it does in the United States.

Whether owing to a self-fulfilling prophecy, the transcendence of contemporary dynamics over political acumen and resources, or truly intractable differences between Europe and Islam, many inside and outside Europe will consider the failure to address and avert the looming crisis arising from the clash of cultures within European borders as confirmation of Huntington's thesis. These same observers will view this outcome as one that sets the stage for the larger, predicted twenty-first-century clash of civilizations along the frontiers where the West and Islam meet.[55]

Conversely, however, a success in dealing with the building clash of cultures and identities, which results in a shift of both Muslim and non-Muslim European mind-sets, and crafts a societal framework that encourages integration and respects individual as well as national identities would negate Huntington's thesis of the inevitable incompatibility of Islam and the West. It would require change in European society, to be sure. As with all change, there would be winners and losers. Yet, success holds out the hope of rein-

vigorating and redefining Europe, proffering a possible corrective to its projected political, economic, and demographic decline as well as moving European integration to a new level and giving it new meaning.

As Mark Twain reportedly remarked, history does not repeat itself, but it sometimes rhymes. It would indeed be ironic if Islam provided the impetus for redefining Europe, as it did more than a millennium ago, and the basis for a new, second European renaissance, as it did for the first. Although that may be expecting too much, success in addressing this clash of cultures, at a minimum, would open the door to a range of opportunities for positive change in Europe and perhaps beyond.

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