

# Radical Islam in Europe

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by Leslie S. Lebl

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*Abstract: Europe now faces three related but different challenges: how to respond, in a time when “native” European populations are shrinking, to the growing presence of Muslim minorities; how to avoid having its relationships with its Muslim communities controlled by Islamists who seek to replace Western civilization with Islamic government based on sharia law; and what to do generally about this Islamist threat. Thus far, the European responses to these challenges have been shaped by four factors: accumulated civilizational exhaustion; the inability to grasp the challenge posed to European national identities by the allure of the global Caliphate; weakness arising from degraded security capabilities, including the impact of the continued drive to “build Europe” by adopting the Treaty of Lisbon; and the preference for appeasement of Islamist demands.*

## Introduction and Summary

In January 2008, U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff warned that Europe risks becoming a “platform for terrorists,” a serious threat to itself as well as to the United States and the rest of the globe.<sup>1</sup> The immediate, severe nature of the Islamist terrorist threat has caused media and government authorities to pay close attention to it. Unfortunately, they – and European political elites in general – have paid less attention to two inter-related issues that are equally worrying: how Europe will live with its growing Muslim minorities; and whether European elites and authorities will learn to identify and respond successfully to the threat posed by “non-violent” Islamism.

Europe’s Muslim minorities, who settled primarily in Western Europe, are a mixture of many different groups, coming from different traditions and cultures. Nevertheless, certain trends are discernable. The combination of Europe’s decades-long resistance to assimilating Muslim immigrants with its

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<sup>1</sup> Kate Kelland, “U.S. Says Europe poses terrorism threat.” *Reuters*, Jan. 16, 2008.

passion for multiculturalism, a passion reinforced by political correctness, has given Europe the worst of both worlds.

While some Muslims have integrated successfully others, along with their second- and third-generation descendants, have been allowed to live in a separate, subsidized world of Muslim ghettos. In these ghettos, traditional tribal and Islamic values prevail over such “European values” as women’s rights. Elements of Islamic law, or *sharia*, are already replacing Western law and “no-go” areas are emerging, areas that European authorities dare not enter.

European governments are belatedly addressing these problems. In addition, they are seeking to protect their citizens from Islamist terror. In both cases, they have turned for advice and support to Muslim organizations and leaders that they believe are moderate or mainstream. In reality, however, many of these groups and individuals are not moderate, but dedicated to supplanting or overthrowing the existing order. Western failure to understand the basic goals of these groups – to decode their doublespeak – has proven costly, and remedies for this failure are slow in appearing.

The Islamists have known what they want and presented it persuasively; the Europeans have done just the opposite. Valiant attempts by both Muslims and non-Muslims to combat radical Islam are constrained by underlying trends working in the opposite direction. These trends include a general lack of energy and conviction to support Western civilization, often framed as civilizational exhaustion.

This trend is linked to a failure to keep either existing national identities or to develop a new European one attractive enough to counteract the allure of radical Islam. In addition, support for European security capabilities is eroding, whether for traditional defense or for combating terrorism, both at the level of national governments and of the European Union. These weaknesses in turn enhance the attraction of appeasement as a response to Islamist demands.

### **A Separate Muslim Europe**

Europe has been on the receiving end of large migratory flows for the past forty years, originally to provide labor for postwar reconstruction and growth, then as a result of family reunification and asylum requests. A recent estimate set the number of immigrants at 7.6 percent of the total population.<sup>2</sup> These individuals tend to be younger and have higher birth rates than the native population. In addition, many so-called immigrant populations also include European-born second- and third-generation descendants who are actually citizens of the European country where they live.

Within this amorphous immigrant category, Muslim populations were estimated in 2007 at 16.1 million, or 3.3 percent of the 482.1 million people

<sup>2</sup> *World Migration Report 2008*, International Organization for Migration, Geneva, Switzerland, p. 455.

living in the twenty-seven EU member states.<sup>3</sup> The migratory patterns vary, with Turks tending to settle in Germany, South Asians in the United Kingdom, and North Africans in France and Belgium. Within this larger pattern, the Muslim presence is concentrated in certain countries and cities. In France, they make up more than 8 percent of the population; in the Netherlands, over 6 percent. In Malmo, Sweden, they account now for over 20 percent of the total population, and could perhaps constitute a majority within a decade or two.<sup>4</sup> In the United Kingdom, Muhammed is already the second most common name for newborn boys, and could soon become the most popular.<sup>5</sup>

*Multiculturalism, political correctness and assimilation.* These immigrants were often relatively uneducated, unskilled workers from rural regions. They arrived in countries that had not traditionally been lands of immigration, and where both governments and ordinary citizens preferred to keep immigrants at arms' length. While governments and immigration experts assumed that by the second or third generation these immigrant groups would by some natural process assimilate into Europe, their societies made little effort to foster such a process.

Widespread intellectual commitment to multiculturalism reinforced the trend of allowing Muslim immigrants and their children to live apart from European society. In theory, multiculturalism holds that all cultures are equally worthy of respect. However, the effect of this concept, according to British columnist Melanie Phillips, is that:

[Multiculturalism] holds that all minority values must have equal status to those of the majority. Any attempt to uphold majority values over minorities is a form of prejudice. That turns minorities into a cultural battering ram to destroy the very idea of being a majority culture at all.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, the practice of giving equal weight to non-European cultures has torn the fabric of European society, loosening its connection to liberal democracy and to other values such as women's rights or equality of all before the law. Multiculturalism has contributed as well to the conviction that Western society is inferior to other cultures – a conviction closely connected to the guilt that many Europeans feel about their countries' colonial pasts.

Multiculturalism became ever more entrenched, occurring as it did in a climate in which, in general, the European political elite tolerate few

<sup>3</sup> David T. Armitage, Jr., "The European Union: Measuring Counterterrorism Cooperation." *Institute for National Strategic Studies*, National Defense University, Strategic Forum #229, Nov. 2007, p. 3. Available at <http://www.ndu.edu/inss>.

<sup>4</sup> Fjordman, "Swedish Welfare State Collapses as Immigrants Wage War." Mar. 28, 2006, <http://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/938>.

<sup>5</sup> Helen Nugent and Nadia Menuhin, "Muhammed is No 2 in boy's names." *The Times*, Jun. 6, 2007, at <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article1890354.ece>.

<sup>6</sup> Melanie Phillips, "Liberalism v Islamism." Presentation at Neo conference, Stockholm, Sweden, May 11, 2007, p. 2.

alternative views. “Diversity, respect, dialogue: this, of course, was the mantra of political correctness, a habit of thought that in America is an annoyance but in Europe is a veritable religion,” according to Bruce Bawer.<sup>7</sup> The result, according to Mark Steyn, is that “. . . Europe has all but succumbed to the dull opiate of multiculturalism.”<sup>8</sup> This tone-deaf approach that ignores the dangers of accommodating people who don’t play by the same rules has helped to create a new form of European Islam.

Although Muslim immigrants came from different countries, cultures and traditions, many of their communities in Europe now lead traditional ways of life (often more traditional than would be possible in their country of origin) at sharp variance with democratic, Western society based on the rule of law. After 9/11 and subsequent terrorist attacks in Europe, some of them by home-grown terrorists, European authorities began to focus more on what was going on inside these Muslim communities.

*Women’s rights:* One of the things the authorities belatedly discovered was massive violations of women’s rights.<sup>9</sup> In many cases, these practices aimed to separate the Muslim communities from their surrounding environment. As Turkish-born German sociologist Necla Kelek observes, with regard to many Turkish women in Germany, “. . . for them, tribal laws still govern – the family’s honor is a higher right than self-determination of the individual.”<sup>10</sup>

Many of these women enter Germany as young brides for the sons or grandsons of Turkish immigrants. Considered more submissive than European-born Turkish women, they frequently end up as household slaves, trapped in the house by family members and by their ignorance of the German language or of Germany.

Imported brides, along with the other women in their families, often find themselves subject to physical abuse and punishment, including honor killings for those who stray.<sup>11</sup> Samira Bellil describes a similar situation among Muslim immigrant communities in France, where domestic violence is common and gang rape functions as an accepted tool to control young Muslim women who refuse to veil themselves or remain at home.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Bruce Bawer, *While Europe Slept: How Radical Islam Is Destroying the West from Within* (New York: Doubleday, 2006), p. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Mark Steyn, *America Alone: The End of the World As We Know It* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2006), p. xxi.

<sup>9</sup> The situation for young Turkish men is also poor. See Necla Kelek, *Die verlorenen Söhne* (Munich: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, 2007) and Ahmet Toprak, *Das schwache Geschlecht – die türkischen Männer* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Lambertus-Verlag, 2007).

<sup>10</sup> Necla Kelek, *Die fremde Braut* (Munich: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, 2006), p. 65 (informal translation).

<sup>11</sup> See also Ahmet Toprak, *Das schwache Geschlecht – die türkischen Männer* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Lambertus-Verlag, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Bellil, Samira. *Dans l’enfer des tournantes* (Paris: Éditions Denoël, 2003).

Several governments, starting with Denmark, moved to forbid these so-called fetching marriages that, in addition to the wrongs done the young women, served to reinforce the isolation of the Muslim community from mainstream society. They have also imposed language and civic knowledge requirements on new immigrants. Ayaan Hirsi Ali describes her efforts to convince the Dutch that honor killings were actually occurring in the Netherlands<sup>13</sup>; since then, a recognition of this problem is growing throughout Europe and some are finally trying to stop it.

Nevertheless, these trends are only partial. For example, little effective opposition to polygamy exists, despite its clear illegality and detrimental impact on both women and children. The UK government, for instance, now allows payment of social benefits to and acknowledges inheritance rights of all members of polygamous families.<sup>14</sup> The Archbishop of Canterbury sparked a dispute by suggesting that the partial implementation of traditional Islamic, or *sharia*, law “seems unavoidable”; despite the curtailment this implied, *inter alia*, of women’s rights.<sup>15</sup> Similar public outrage greeted the decision of a German judge to base her decision in a divorce case on *sharia* law.<sup>16</sup> A Swedish judge had already done the same thing.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, pressure continues to implement *sharia* law.<sup>18</sup>

*Behavior of young men:* Something must also be done to counter the role assigned to many young Muslim men. For young Turkish men interviewed by German educational expert Ahmet Toprak, family honor is foremost – and is almost exclusively measured by the perceived sexual behavior of the women. Young men must enforce this behavior; they expend much less time or effort on speaking German, receiving a good education or obtaining good employment than on defending their honor.<sup>19</sup> This pattern repeats itself in other countries and among other Muslim communities.

An estimated 40 percent of Muslim youth in France and 50 percent in Germany are unemployed but far from destitute. Rather, they receive a wide range of social benefits.<sup>20</sup> An estimated 40 percent of welfare outlays in Denmark go to the 5 percent of the population that is Muslim.<sup>21</sup> According

<sup>13</sup> Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *Infidel* (New York: Free Press, 2007), p. 309.

<sup>14</sup> Daniel Pipes. “Britain’s encounter with Islamic law.” *Jerusalem Post*, Feb. 12, 2008.

<sup>15</sup> “Sharia Law in UK is ‘unavoidable.’” BBC News, Feb. 7, 2008, available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7232661.htm>.

<sup>16</sup> Kate Connolly. “German judge invokes Qur’an to deny abused wife a divorce.” *The Guardian*, Mar. 23, 2007.

<sup>17</sup> Daniel Pipes. “Swedish Follies,” Sept. 1, 2005, at [http://www.danielpipes.org/blog\\_pf.php?id=507](http://www.danielpipes.org/blog_pf.php?id=507).

<sup>18</sup> See “A Guide to *Shariab* Law and Islamist Ideology in Western Europe 2007-2009” by the Centre for Islamic Pluralism, 2009, as well as Denis MacEoin, *Sharia Law or ‘One Law for All?’* (London: Civitas, 2009).

<sup>19</sup> Ahmet Toprak, *op. cit.*

<sup>20</sup> “French Lessons: How to Create an Underclass,” *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 11, 2005.

<sup>21</sup> Bawer, *While Europe Slept*, p. 30.

to Otty Schily, former German interior minister, speaking of immigrants in general: "Seventy percent of the newcomers [since 2002] land on welfare the day of their arrival."<sup>22</sup> Similar stories abound in other West European countries.

Rather than engendering respect and support for the Western system, this enforced idleness coupled with government handouts has bred contempt. Some interpret the payment of social benefits as a form of *jiziyah*, the poll tax traditionally paid in Islamic societies by non-Muslim peoples as a sign of their submission to Islam. In other words, not only are the social benefits interpreted as a right due to Muslim recipients, but they reflect the higher, dominant position of the latter.<sup>23</sup>

Violent crime, including muggings, robbery, rape and rioting, provides another means to establish dominance over non-Muslims. Many European cities are experiencing crime waves in which young Muslims, often operating in gangs, are the primary aggressors, although media and government reports usually omit this fact.<sup>24</sup> The primary victims include not only young Muslim women, but increasingly the European population at large.

Harder to deny has been the emergence of no-go areas where police or municipal authorities venture only at great risk. Ghetto inhabitants have now taken up arms against the French police in Paris; the situation is worse now than it was during the 2005 riots.<sup>25</sup> To keep innocent citizens out of trouble, an official French website lists some 751 "zones urbaines sensibles" to avoid.<sup>26</sup> In Denmark, government authorities have accepted the offer of local imams to assist them in keeping order in the Muslim community of Gellerup.<sup>27</sup> In practical terms, they have turned it over to Muslim rule.

### Recognizing and Challenging Radical Islam

The Madrid train bombings of March 2004, the murder of Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh in November 2004, and the London subway and bus bombings of 2005 brought home to Europeans the direct threat of Islamist terrorism – terrorism committed by their own citizens, not foreigners. Indeed, the trend toward home-grown terrorism has strengthened since then, while the age of recruits has dropped and the time required for radicalization

<sup>22</sup> Quoted in Peter Schneider, "The New Berlin Wall," *New York Times*, Dec. 4, 2005.

<sup>23</sup> Bawer, *While Europe Slept*, p. 30.

<sup>24</sup> See Bawer, *While Europe Slept*, pp. 37-40; Pernille Ammitzbohl and Lorenzo Vidino, "After the Danish Cartoon Controversy," *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2007, pp. 3-11; and Theodore Dalrymple, "Barbarians at the Gates of Paris," in *Our Culture, What's Left of It: The Mandarins and the Masses* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2005), pp. 296-310.

<sup>25</sup> Patrick Poole, "The Parisian Intifada and 'The Project,'" *FrontPageMagazine.com*, Nov. 29, 2007.

<sup>26</sup> See <http://i.ville.gouv.fr/divbib/doc/chercherZUS.htm>.

<sup>27</sup> Pernille Ammitzbohl and Lorenzo Vidino, "After the Danish Cartoon Controversy."

has fallen sharply. European governments have responded to this threat in various ways, usually applying heightened security measures combined with initiatives to reassure the broader Muslim community that it is not the target of those measures.

As an integral part of their outreach efforts, European governments have turned to Muslim organizations and individuals that officials perceived as moderate or mainstream. Governments sought both their assistance in reassuring the Muslim community and their advice on how to do so. Yet this approach has often turned out to be a dangerous mistake.

For starters, the question of representation is a thorny one. European Muslim communities are comprised of people from many different countries and traditions, with significant generational differences. Determining who speaks for them is inherently difficult. To give just one example, in a recent survey, 51 percent of British Muslims felt that no Muslim organization represented their views.<sup>28</sup> Nor were the organizations and individuals in question moderate; often, they were closely linked to Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood.

Islamist ideology calls for the pursuit and creation of a global Islamist state, called a Caliphate, that unites all Muslims and is governed by Islamic, or *sharia* law. Its adherents consider Islam to be a comprehensive guide to life; they do not believe Islam can be limited to the religious realm. Nor do they accept that the interpretation of Islam could evolve over the centuries, or be modified by cultural or regional differences.<sup>29</sup> They want Muslims to live apart from non-Muslim, secular societies – unless those societies are controlled by the Caliphate.

Islamist organizations are dedicated to replacing, by peaceful means, Western legal systems with Islamic *sharia* law. Publicly, they present themselves as non-violent but often maintain ties with jihadist organizations. Often, they serve as a conveyor belt: people who are attracted to Islam and subsequently adopt their Islamist ideology are a significant source of recruits for jihadist groups.<sup>30</sup>

*The Muslim Brotherhood:* Because the Muslim Brotherhood plays such an important role in Europe today, it is worth a closer look. Considered to be the largest Islamic movement in the world, it was founded in 1928 in Egypt,

<sup>28</sup> Munira Mirza, Abi Senthikumaran and Zein Ja'far, "Living apart together: British Muslims and the paradox of multiculturalism." London, Policy Exchange, 2007, p. 6. Available at [www.policyexchange.org.uk](http://www.policyexchange.org.uk).

<sup>29</sup> See definitions in "Violent Islamist Extremism, The Internet, and the Homegrown Terrorist Threat." United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Majority and Minority Staff Report, May 8, 2008; and Zeyno Baran, "The Muslim Brotherhood's U.S. Network." The Hudson Institute, *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Vol. 6, p. 96.

<sup>30</sup> See Ed Husain, *The Islamist* (London: Penguin Books, 2007); and Sean O'Neill and Daniel McGrory, *The Suicide Factory: Abu Hamza and the Finsbury Park Mosque* (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), for detailed descriptions of these mechanisms.

with the stated goal of restoring the Islamic Caliphate abolished by Turkish President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1924. Its motto was: "Allah is our objective. The Prophet is our leader. The Koran is our law. Jihad is our way. Dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope."

Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser accused the Muslim Brotherhood of plotting to assassinate him in 1954 and systematically repressed it until his death in 1971. Many Brothers were imprisoned, tortured or executed; others fled. Some Brothers ended up in Saudi Arabia, where they joined forces with Wahhabist teachers and ideologues.<sup>31</sup>

Others made their way to Europe, including Said Ramadan, the son-in-law of Muslim Brotherhood founder Hassan al-Banna. He arrived in Geneva in 1958, where in 1961 he set up the Islamic Center of Geneva<sup>32</sup> with the help of Saudi funding.<sup>33</sup> He also established the Islamic Society of Germany, which has since become one of Germany's three main Muslim organizations.<sup>34</sup> One of his sons, Hani, now heads the Center in Geneva; his other son Tariq is considered by many to be the leading spokesman today for French Muslims.

In the ensuing decades, the Muslim Brotherhood "steadily established a wide and well-organized network of mosques, charities, and Islamic organizations."<sup>35</sup> This is true in Germany, where the Brotherhood presence is best-organized; in France, where the principal Islamic organization, the Union of Islamic Organizations of France, is linked to the Brotherhood; and in Belgium, of particular interest because of the central EU institutions located there.<sup>36</sup>

In Brussels, the Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE), an umbrella organization with close connections to the Brotherhood,<sup>37</sup> and the Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organizations (FEMYSO), have in recent years consulted with the European Commission, the European Parliament and other organizations such as the Council of Europe.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, organizations and individuals linked to the Muslim Brotherhood often have a virtual monopoly on contacts with the same governments who claim to be seeking to combat radical Islam.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Osama Bin Laden, as a university student in the 1970s in Jeddah, attended public lectures by Muhammad Qutb, the brother of Muslim Brotherhood leader Sayyid Qutb. See Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006).

<sup>32</sup> Islamic Center website, <http://www.cige.org/cige/historique.html>.

<sup>33</sup> Lorenzo Vidino, "The Muslim Brotherhood's Conquest of Europe." *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2005, available at <http://www.meforum.org/pf.php?id=687>.

<sup>34</sup> Vidino, "Muslim Brotherhood's Conquest."

<sup>35</sup> Vidino, "Muslim Brotherhood's Conquest."

<sup>36</sup> Steve Merley, "The Muslim Brotherhood in Belgium." *NEFA Foundation*, Apr. 14, 2008.

<sup>37</sup> Merley, "Muslim Brotherhood," p. 11.

<sup>38</sup> Merley, "Muslim Brotherhood," pp. 17-18.

<sup>39</sup> A similar situation exists in the United States, where government entities turn to organizations such as the Council on American-Islamic Relations and the Islamic Society of North America that are known to be connected to the Muslim Brotherhood. See Zeyno Baran, "The Muslim Brotherhood's U.S. Network," pp. 95-122.



These organizations and their members usually deny any connection to the Muslim Brotherhood, arguing instead that they represent moderate views and insisting that they eschew violence. However, their statements and actions are consistent with a document seized during a raid in November 2001 on the Swiss villa of Youssef Nada, a banker proud of his long association with the Muslim Brotherhood. This anonymous document, entitled “The Project,” is considered to contain the global political strategy of the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>40</sup>

Among the goals listed in “The Project” are: to establish an Islamic State; to build social, economic, scientific and health institutions as a means of establishing contact with the people, and to work through parliamentary and other mechanisms but not to participate in decision-making contrary to *sharia* law; to support jihad movements throughout the world, including in Palestine; to push for the total liberation of Palestine; and “to nourish a sentiment of rancor with respect to the Jews and refuse all coexistence.”

Muslim Brotherhood representatives deny that this document has any relevance. Further, many Muslim organizations and leaders deny any links to radical Islamist groups. Europeans (and Americans) have been too prone to accept such denials at face value, and too reluctant to challenge Muslim representatives to state publicly their views on key issues, such as *sharia*-mandated death sentences for apostasy or adultery, or support for jihad, defined as such actions as suicide bombings and terrorism. When challenged, the responses of representatives suggest that these groups indeed aim either to keep Muslims from integrating into Western society, or to change that society fundamentally.

Sheikh Yousuf Al-Qaradhawi, considered the greatest living scholar of Islam and long viewed by many Europeans as a key moderate interlocutor, has admitted to having joined the Brotherhood but claims he is no longer a member. However, some of his public statements, for example a July 2007 speech on Qatar TV, are consistent with the strategy outlined in “The Project:”

The conquest of Rome – the conquest of Italy, and Europe – means that Islam will return to Europe once again. But must this conquest necessarily be through war? No. There is such a thing as a peaceful conquest. The peaceful conquest has foundations in this religion, and therefore I expect that Islam will conquer Europe without resorting to the sword or fighting. It will do so by *da'wa* [proselytizing Islam] and ideology.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> See Sylvain Besson, *La conquête de l'occident: le projet secret des islamistes* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2005). It contains a French translation of the document; for an English text, see Patrick Poole, “The Muslim Brotherhood ‘Project,’” Jan. 15, 2007, at <http://www.frontpagemagazine.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?id=22415>.

<sup>41</sup> “Sheik Yousuf Al-Qaradhawi: Islam’s ‘Conquest of Rome’ Will Save Europe from Its Subjugation to Materialism and Promiscuity.” Qatar TV, July 28, 2007, translated by MEMRI. See <http://www.memritv.org/clip/en/1592.htm>. His message is consistent; he said much the same thing in 1995 in Toledo, Ohio.

Only in February 2008 did the UK government, which for years had allowed Islamists to flourish in London and other British cities, deny Al-Qaradhawi a visa. Their decision was based in part on numerous public statements which left no doubt that he espoused violence and hatred toward non-Muslims. Al-Qaradhawi's peaceful conquest looks less peaceful in the context of his public statements attacking Jews and homosexuals, condemning the Danish cartoonists, and endorsing suicide attacks.<sup>42</sup> Yet he remains at the head of any number of Muslim institutions in Europe, including the European Council on Fatwa and Research, which seeks to define the rules for Muslims living in the West.

Similarly, Tariq Ramadan distances himself from the Brotherhood, saying that he should not be judged by what his grandfather or father did. His numerous supporters consider him to be the *de facto* spokesman for French Muslims; his detractors consider him a master of duplicity.<sup>43</sup> Ramadan was at one time denied a visa by the French authorities because of alleged links to an Algerian terrorist group.<sup>44</sup> A decade later, the United States also denied him a visa under a provision barring terrorists and their associates, as well as people who have incited others to violence.<sup>45</sup>

In 2003, Ramadan's reputation as a moderate suffered after he called for a moratorium on stoning as the punishment for adultery during a debate with French then-Minister of Interior Nicolas Sarkozy.<sup>46</sup> More recently, he lost a position as advisor to the Rotterdam city government, as well as an appointment at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam, for hosting a weekly talk show on government-controlled Iranian television.<sup>47</sup> However, he has kept his position at Oxford University, and remains extremely popular with both Muslims and non-Muslims.

Thus, the Muslim leaders to whom European policymakers turn are often the ones most likely to recommend steps that will increase the segregation and alienation of Muslim minorities from the Western societies in which they live; enhance the dominance of the Muslim Brotherhood; advance

<sup>42</sup> For a compilation of recent statements, see "Sheikh Yousef Al-Qaradhawi barred from UK," MEMRI Special Announcement No. 63, Feb. 20, 2008, at [www.memri.org](http://www.memri.org).

<sup>43</sup> See Caroline Fourest, *Frère Tariq: discours, stratégie et méthode de Tariq Ramadan* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 2004); Paul Landau, "Islamic 'Reformism' and Jihad: on the Discourse of Tariq Ramadan," *Transatlantic Intelligencer*, 2005; Daniel Pipes, "Why Revoke Tariq Ramadan's U.S. Visa?" *New York Sun*, Aug. 27, 2004.

<sup>44</sup> Olivier Guitta, "Danger: Tariq Ramadan is coming to the US." *American Thinker*, May 3, 2004.

<sup>45</sup> Peter Slevin, "Lacking Visa, Islamic Scholar Resigns Post at Notre Dame," *Washington Post*, Dec. 15, 2004.

<sup>46</sup> John Rosenthal, "Tariq Ramadan, Non-Violent Man of Peace." *Transatlantic Intelligencer*, Oct. 22, 2004, at <http://www.trans-int.com>.

<sup>47</sup> Mark Hoogstad, "Rotterdam Fires Tariq Ramadan over Iranian TV Show." *NRC Handelsblad*, Aug. 19, 2009, and Dirk Schümer, "Dismissal over TV Show," Aug. 27, 2009 at [http://www.qantara.de/webcom/show\\_article.php/\\_c-476/\\_nr-1210/i.html](http://www.qantara.de/webcom/show_article.php/_c-476/_nr-1210/i.html).

the spread of *sharia* law, and improve the outlook for re-establishing the Caliphate, this time on a global scale. This is not a formula for success – at least from the perspective of the West.

### The Bigger Picture

Initially, Europe offered Islamists a convenient base of operations – a place to regroup and organize actions back home without being disrupted by the authorities. This freedom eventually led not only to a global headquarters for radical Islam, but to the evolution of a particularly virulent strand of Islamic radicalism.

To combat Islamism, Europeans need to offer a robust, attractive alternative, whether in the spiritual, ideological or even financial realm. Unfortunately, thus far they have not done so. The Islamists have known what they want and presented it persuasively; the Europeans have done just the opposite. The European response has been muted by a mixture of civilizational exhaustion, weakened national identity, degraded security, and a preference for appeasement.

*Civilizational exhaustion:* A number of observers have remarked on Europe's lack of ability or desire to counter the Islamist threat, linking it to everything from the lack of children to the ubiquity of social benefits.<sup>48</sup> Certainly, declining native European populations are real. The number of children being born is well below the total fertility rate of 2.1 births per woman needed to maintain a constant population size, especially in countries such as Italy and Greece where families have traditionally been large. Even in Central and Eastern Europe, the economies may be relatively dynamic, but some countries are already shrinking.<sup>49</sup>

Many observers view declining birth rates, along with falling marriage rates and increasing numbers of children born out of wedlock, as indicators of a spiritual or civilizational decline. To explain this they cite a number of causes, from the decline of religion to the corruptive power of a socialized state that turns citizens into dependents.

Perhaps the most searing analysis is contained in the 1973 novel, *The Camp of the Saints*, by French travel writer Jean Raspail.<sup>50</sup> In this book, a

<sup>48</sup> See, for example, Steyn, *America Alone*; Bawer, *While Europe Slept*; Claire Berlinski, *Menace in Europe* (New York: Crown Forum, 2006); Walter Laqueur, *The Last Days of Europe* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2007); and Bruce Thornton, *Decline and Fall* (New York: Encounter Books, 2007).

<sup>49</sup> *Recent demographic developments in Europe: 2004*, Council of Europe, France, January 2005; and *Demographic Outlook: National reports on the demographic developments in 2006*, Eurostat methodologies and working papers, 2007 edition, European Commission, Brussels, Belgium.

<sup>50</sup> Jean Raspail, *The Camp of the Saints* (Petoskey, Michigan: The Social Contract Press, 1987).

million poor people in the Ganges Delta set sail for the West. They make landfall on the south coast of France and take over that country in three days. In short order, waves of people follow them and the rest of Europe collapses as well.

Raspail deliberately chose people from the Ganges, in part to avoid entangling his story in the issues involving North African immigrants in France.<sup>51</sup> He focused instead on the intellectual poverty and moral cowardice masquerading as politically correct multiculturalism that facilitates the West's collapse. Raspail does not stop there, though. He also describes a paralyzing dilemma: good soldiers just can't bring themselves to fire into crowds of emaciated, unarmed people. In general, no one can deny entry to others who are obviously so much poorer, even though the arrival of those hordes will destroy all of Europe's material and cultural advantages.<sup>52</sup>

A generation later, many Europeans do indeed appear largely paralyzed in the face of radical Islam. Whether, as Steyn notes, "Islam has youth and will, Europe has age and welfare,"<sup>53</sup> or as Bawer puts it, "when Christian faith . . . departed, it [took] with it a sense of ultimate meaning and purpose – and left the Continent vulnerable to conquest by people with deeper faith and stronger convictions,"<sup>54</sup> the result is much the same. Multiculturalism both undermines the *status quo* and provides a perfect alibi for people who can no longer defend their civilization, country, laws, or culture. Cherished values such as human rights or respect for diversity not only become debilitating liabilities; they serve as weapons for those seeking to overthrow the West.

*Competing identities:* The unattractiveness of European national identity and patriotism throughout most of Europe compounds this problem. Whether this lack of loyalty to one's country is due to the destruction and horror of two World Wars, shame over the legacy of colonialism, a loss of confidence in liberal democracy, or the emergence of an alternative identity (if unattractive and incomplete) offered by the European Union, the result is the same.

Many young Muslims, as well as some native Europeans, are unimpressed by the thin gruel of European values offered as the foundation of the EU identity: the mix of human rights, humanitarian intervention and abolition of the death penalty. Instead, they would rather be a member of the vanguard fighting for the global Caliphate – a Caliphate that combines a public certification of religious purity with the practical advantage of dominating the rest of humanity.

<sup>51</sup> Raspail, *Camp of the Saints*, p. xv.

<sup>52</sup> In the book, he contrasts this attitude with that of the Egyptians, who threaten to sink the flotilla if it attempts to pass through the Suez Canal. The leaders of the flotilla decide to sail around the Horn of Africa instead.

<sup>53</sup> Steyn, *America Alone*, p. xix.

<sup>54</sup> Bawer, *While Europe Slept*, p. 34.

The vision of a global Caliphate may appear delusional, but there is no doubt of growing support in Europe for an alternate, Muslim future. For instance, almost 40 percent of young Muslims surveyed recently in the United Kingdom said they would prefer to live under *sharia* law.<sup>55</sup> In part, this statistic reflects a general increase in religiosity. However, when combined with substantial support for suicide bombers, it also suggests that Islamists, often operating in the virtual world of the internet, have made significant inroads in Britain's Muslim communities.<sup>56</sup>

*Degraded security:* Europe is particularly vulnerable to pressure tactics because its concept of security has been so downgraded. Governments basically exist to protect their citizens, yet Europeans today feel no direct military threat. As a result, defense policy and the defense establishment have become unimportant. As one observer says, "European armies are no longer repositories of nationhood and career advancement, but organizations that have as much social status as the postal service."<sup>57</sup>

European attitudes toward security also color the fight against terrorism. Many law enforcement and intelligence officials recognize the seriousness of the threat, but large swathes of the political elite continue to downplay it. Thus, former U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff argued that the EU and United States pursue similar counterterrorism policies,<sup>58</sup> but while his assessment is accurate, very few European politicians are willing to confirm it in public because of its unpopularity. Their silence only strengthens the opponents of these policies, from strong supporters of civil liberties to opponents of the United States.

Security concerns also take a back seat when it comes to deepening and expanding European integration. The next stage of integration, contained in the EU's new Treaty of Lisbon, aims to give the EU a greater role in counterterrorism. However, the way in which this transformation would take place will likely accomplish just the opposite since the European Parliament and the European Court of Justice, two EU institutions with no security expertise, will be given greatly expanded roles on these issues.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Munira Mirza, Abi Senthikumar and Zein Ja'far, "Living Apart Together," p. 5.

<sup>56</sup> A 2007 Pew survey reveals similar trends among young American Muslims, an important measure of the attractiveness of radical Islam, since American Muslims are far more integrated than their European counterparts, and have done well both educationally and professionally.

<sup>57</sup> Josef Joffe, *Nations We Love to Hate: Israel, America and the New Antisemitism* (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2005), p. 14. Monograph based on a lecture delivered at the Center for German Studies at Ben Gurion University, Spring 2004.

<sup>58</sup> Michael Chertoff, "Transatlantic Convergence Passenger Data Questions." *Homeland Security*, Winter/Spring 2008, at [http://www.europeanaffairs.org/current\\_issue/2008\\_winter\\_spring\\_01.php4](http://www.europeanaffairs.org/current_issue/2008_winter_spring_01.php4). For background, see Leslie S. Lebl, "Security Beyond Borders," *Policy Review* no. 130 (April/May 2005), pp. 23-43.

<sup>59</sup> Mark Richard and Leslie S. Lebl, "Security and Data Sharing." *Policy Review*, April/May 2009, pp. 79-92.

So what do Europeans actually fear? Polling data offers conflicting messages. On the one hand, in a 2008 online poll by *Die Welt*, 74 percent of respondents said they thought Germany was a hotbed of Islamic radicalism.<sup>60</sup> On the other hand, Europeans have repeatedly told pollsters that the United States and Israel, rather than jihadists or Iran, are the greatest threats to world peace. Anti-American and anti-Zionist discourse, no matter how irrational,<sup>61</sup> is common and accepted, while anti-Muslim discourse is not.

It is hard to believe that Europeans thronging to New York for a cheap vacation fear the United States. Nevertheless, this jumble of conflicting fears must prove demoralizing and disorienting to the average citizen. It also alienates Europe and America at a time when they most need to work closely together.

Europeans consider themselves to have advanced beyond the United States and its hard military power to a point where they rely on soft power – assets like international law, diplomacy, economic and cultural power – to advance their interests. Soft power, unfortunately, does not appear to be much use against a determined onslaught from the Muslim world any more than, for instance, it dissuaded the Iranian regime from developing nuclear weapons or supporting terrorism. In fact, its end result is often appeasement, a mockery of Europe's vaunted democratic values.

*A preference for appeasement:* The title of a short book by German pundit Henryk Broder, *Hurra, wir kapitulieren!* (*Hooray, we're capitulating!*) summarizes what many fear is the true European answer to the challenge from radical Islam.<sup>62</sup> He describes a Europe preemptively surrendering to perceived and real demands from radical Muslims, both in domestic and foreign policy – in fact, the two are intertwined.

The dispute over the Danish cartoons of Mohammed reveals how this intertwining occurs. Several radical imams failed to rouse Danish Muslims over the cartoons, but hit the jackpot when they took their (doctored) case to Muslim governments in the Middle East. Islamists in Europe may fear imprisonment, torture or execution from their own governments; yet that did not prevent the two parties from making common cause against Europe.

Islamists view this desire to appease an opponent, to work out a *modus vivendi*, as another step toward submission, the proper response of non-Muslims toward an Islamic state. Constant threats of violence, including death threats, made to those who offer resistance, enhance pressure for appeasement. Pope Benedict XVI has persevered despite these threats,

<sup>60</sup>The online poll is contained in the article, "Cüneyt C. hat versucht, Deutscher zu werden," March 17, 2008, at [http://www.welt.de/politik/article1809554/Cueneyt\\_C\\_hat\\_versucht\\_Deutscher\\_zu\\_werden.html](http://www.welt.de/politik/article1809554/Cueneyt_C_hat_versucht_Deutscher_zu_werden.html).

<sup>61</sup>See Joffe, *Nations We Love to Hate*, for a definition of what constitutes anti-Americanism or anti-Zionism, as opposed to legitimate criticism of either Israel or the United States.

<sup>62</sup>Henryk M. Broder, *Hurra, wir kapitulieren!: Von der Lust am Einknicken* (Berlin: Wolf Jobst Sieder jr, 2006).

baptizing a prominent Muslim dissident on Easter Sunday in 2008. So has the former British Bishop of Rochester, Michael Nazir-Ali, who received death threats after he said that Islamic extremism has turned “already separate communities into ‘no-go’ areas where adherence to this ideology has become a mark of acceptability.”<sup>63</sup>

Unfortunately, Europe’s political elite does not greet these acts of courage with approbation or support, but instead condemns them for making trouble. Each time government officials, media representatives or intellectuals abandon someone who speaks up against radical Islam, whether it is Dutch politician Geert Wilders or French high school teacher Robert Radeker (under death threats for calling Islam a violent religion), they ensure future pressure for even more sweeping submissive gestures. And by giving in, they undercut precisely those European Muslims who support Western values.<sup>64</sup>

## Conclusion

Tariq Ramadan is correct when he argues that Muslims are already in Europe; that their numbers will increase in the future as those of native Europeans decline; and that Europeans need to think about how to integrate Muslims into Europe.<sup>65</sup>

The key lies in how Europe will respond.

Some European leaders and citizens are already seeking to enforce existing laws and to guarantee existing freedoms for all European citizens and residents, often at considerable risk to themselves. However, at present they are swimming against a strong tide.

If Europe cannot defend its culture, its liberal democracy and its rule of law; if it is unable to inspire a healthy sense of national identity or defend its own security; or if it continues to appease rather than oppose Islamist pressures, then the future looks bleak indeed. Should these trends prevail, Europe will be unable to protect its own citizens, let alone welcome those Muslims who also want to enjoy the freedoms of the West and contribute to Western society.



<sup>63</sup> Michael Nazir-Ali, “Extremism flourished as UK lost Christianity.” *Telegraph*, Nov. 1, 2008, and Martin Beckford, “Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali: Radical Islam is filling void left by collapse of Christianity in UK.” *Telegraph*, May 29, 2008. Both at [www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk).

<sup>64</sup> See “Libyan Liberal Muhammad Al-Houni on Statements by Archbishop of Canterbury: If Europe Adopts Shari’a, It Will Revert to Pre-Enlightenment Era.” MEMRI Special Dispatch No. 1877, Mar. 24, 2008, available at [www.memri.org](http://www.memri.org).

<sup>65</sup> See “Tariq Ramadan on ‘Islam is a European Religion,’” [www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxjL3CIs0xw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxjL3CIs0xw).