BECOMING EUROPEAN, BECOMING ENEMY: MOSQUE CONFLICTS AND FINDING A PERMANENT PLACE FOR ISLAM IN EUROPE

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ABSTRACT

BECOMING EUROPEAN, BECOMING ENEMY:
MOSQUE CONFLICTS AND FINDING A PERMANENT PLACE
FOR ISLAM IN EUROPE

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This thesis aims to problematize the cosmopolitan-spirited quest for a proper and permanent place for Islam and Muslim immigrants in Europe today, and to claim that the efforts to establish a European Islam cannot be thought in isolation from the efforts to consolidate a European identity. Since "Europeanizing" Islam is a process of inserting it into the politically acceptable formations of the secular in the European public sphere, not only does this project fail to offer a genuine alternative framework for belonging, or an authentic opportunity for dialogue, but also in fact consolidates the European civilizational identity on the one hand, and sustains the metanarrative about the Islamic threat on the other. The major argument of this thesis, therefore, is that the stranger (Muslim) is allowed to enter the host's secular space only under the conditions that construct Islam as the enemy. Forging a European Islam under the rules of secularism, without a radical interruption of the secular - religious division, and without referring to its implication in the discourses of Orientalism and racism, is ultimately a reconsolidation of the authority of the self-same European. This argument will be illustrated via a critical study of three cases of mosque debates in European cities.

Keywords: European Islam, European identity, mosque conflicts, secularism

ÖZ

AVRUPALI İSLAM:
CAMİ TARTIŞMALARI VE AVRUPA'DA İSLAM'A
KALICI BİR YER BULMAK

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Bu tez, günümüzde Avrupa'da İslam'a ve Müslüman göçmenlere uygun ve kalıcı bir yer bulma arayışını sorunsallaştırmayı amaçlamakta ve "Avrupalı İslam" anlayışının ortak bir Avrupa kimliği oluşturma çabasından bağımsız düşünülemeyeceğini savunmaktadır. İslam'ın "Avrupalılaştırılması"nın, İslam'ın Avrupa'da kabul edilebilir seküler biçimlenmelere eklemlenmesine işaret ettiği göz önünde bulundurulursa, bu projenin aidiyet ya da diyalog için özgün bir alternatif yaratmadığı, tam tersine, bir yandan medeniyetsel üstünlüğünü koruyan Avrupalılık kimliğini diğer yandan ise İslam'ın bir tehdit oluşturduğuna dair üst-anlatıyı pekiştirdiği görülebilir. Dolayısıyla, yabancı konumunda olan Müslüman'ın, Avrupalı ev sahibinin seküler alanına ancak İslam'ın düşman konumunda tutulduğu şartlar altında girebileceği bu tezin ana fikrini oluşturur. Sekülerizmin kuralları altında, dini – seküler ayrımına temel bir müdahalede bulunmadan ve bu kuralların Oryantalist, sömürgeci ve ırkçı söylemlerle ilişkisini irdelemeden Avrupalı bir İslam tasarlamak, kendinden menkul Avrupalılığın otoritesini pekiştirmektir. Bu argüman, son yıllarda çeşitli Avrupa şehirlerinde süregelen camilerle ilgili tartışmalardan üç vaka üzerinde durularak ortaya konulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Avrupalı İslam, Avrupa kimliği, cami tartışmaları, sekülerizm

To my parents,
Ayşe & Nadi Sarıkuzu

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The political and social climate in contemporary Europe is often identified with the crisis of misguided multiculturalist policies and is characterized by a pessimistic clash of civilizations perspective. Within this climate, three general standpoints as to the demise of the figures of the Muslims and the European can be pointed out. The extreme standpoint holds that Europe and Islam belong to utterly different geographies, histories and sensibilities, and are therefore completely incompatible. Taking culture as a static and archaic artifact, proponents of this view argue that Islam has to be "modernized" if it is to remain – yet never fully belong – in Europe. This is the drive behind calls for anti-immigration policies characterized by a fear of Islamization of Europe.

The more moderate standpoint still retains a static view on culture and identity, only to argue that Islam is a tolerant, peaceful and historically adaptive religion "in its essence." Proponents of this view are eager to show the ways in which Muslim immigrants "evolved" throughout their contact with Europe in order to prove that Islam and the West are compatible. This often leads to state-sponsored efforts to intensify inter-faith dialogue and institutionalize a homegrown liberal Islam by creating a national representative body, much like a Church.

Lastly, a more critical view dwells on the possibilities of mutual change and the prospects of forging a "European Islam." Lacking the intense theological tint of the former view, "Euro-Islam" is rather characterized by a more relational view on social change and a focus on the productive processes of religious pluralism. Explicitly emphasizing the importance of openness and dialogue, the idea of "Euro-Islam" is a cosmopolitan celebration of breaking down frontiers and constantly

opening up new public spaces for a more democratic, permanent, and dignified place for Islam in Europe.

The aim of this thesis is to problematize this cosmopolitan-spirited quest for finding a proper and permanent place for Islam in Europe today, and to claim that the efforts to establish a European Islam cannot be thought in isolation from the efforts to consolidate a European identity, which still holds fast to its sense of civilizational superiority. This argument will be illustrated via a critical study of three cases of mosque debates in European cities.

After this introduction, Chapter 2 will begin with an overview of the European experience with Muslims in the postwar immigration period. The ultimate aim of the first chapter is to demonstrate that due to the existence of an overarching meta-narrative of Europeanness based on liberal civic values, integration policies cannot be explained adequately within nation-specific comparative perspectives. Europe in general is overcome by a general security panic with the apparent lack of integration among Muslim immigrants, which precipitates in an extreme skepticism about the premises and effects of multiculturalism, so that the primary concern is no longer to invest in multicultural diversity. As it is also no longer possible to aspire towards mono-cultural societies either, there is a general shift of emphasis towards a concern about the Muslim immigrants' loyalty, especially when multiculturalism and transnational linkages are perceived to be encouraging an ambiguity of commitment.

In the following chapter, the quest for a European identity will be problematized. Following a discussion of Europe as an idea, a set of two interrelated questions will be identified, which appear extensively in the critical debates about European identity. The first question, "How did Europe become European?" investigates the past for the inter-civilizational dynamics that have contributed to the production of Europe as a political and cultural entity. The second question, "How European is Europe?" meanwhile, emphasizes the diversity in the continent, and tries to relate the present state of matters to a more utopian ideal of Europe. These two inquiries constantly inform each other in the critical assessment of Europe's cultural and political borders.

The aim of Chapter 3 is to demonstrate that due to the intricate relationship between colonialism, racism, and the European civilizational narrative, positing a "unity in diversity" in Europe necessitates an erasure of its colonial past on the one hand, and its own history of antagonisms and traumatic experiences on the other. This is further related to the fact that Europe as a project, to be accepted as such, must provide a "better alternative" to the present order. The most remarkable feature of the current discourses on Europe, therefore, is the effort to invent a new "exemplary" identity that is "good and noble," while "awakening history to its proper end" in order to pretend that it has been thus all along.

After the demonstration of the complicated persistence of European civilization narrative in contemporary discourses, Chapter 4 will go on to situate the current discussions about finding a permanent place for Muslims in Europe within the particular context of finding a proper name for Europe itself. By juxtaposing the prospects of "Europeanizing Islam" with the deep-seated fear of the "Islamization of Europe," the main argument in this chapter will hold that the current discussions about finding a permanent and proper place for Islam in Europe are guided by two concerns: First, the Europeanization of Islam through dialogue with moderate elements is deemed necessary in order to prevent the radicalization of Muslims in Europe. Secondly, these efforts should be seen as another instance of the civilizational mission that Europe assumes, which emerges as a desire that the other recognizes the name Europe has chosen for itself. The picture that unfolds throughout the discussion in Chapter 4 suggests that in the context of the somewhat desperate efforts to come up with a more acceptable Europe, establishing an acceptable Islam as a secular civic religion consequently secures a higher ground for the civilizational basis of Europeanness. This is achieved through an elaborate discourse of openness, dialogue and tolerance.

Afterwards, there will be a critical discussion of the secularization thesis and its discontents via the intellectual exchange between Jose Casanova, who maintains that deprivatized religions are "immanent critiques of modernity from a modern religious point of view," and Talal Asad, who criticizes Casanova for basically overlooking the coercive structure of the secular public sphere itself. With this insight, the effort to "Europeanize" Islam is to insert it into the politically acceptable formations of the secular in the European public sphere. As such, not

only does the project of Euro-Islam fail to offer a genuine alternative framework for belonging, or an authentic opportunity for dialogue, but it also in fact consolidates the European civilizational identity on the one hand, and sustains the metanarrative about the Islamic threat on the other. In order to understand what this implicates, the final discussion in Chapter 4 will weave together the basic of arguments of Talal Asad and Gil Anidjar with the Derridean notion of hospitality. Ultimately, the major argument will be that the stranger (Muslim) is allowed to enter the host's secular space only under the conditions that construct Islam as the enemy. The central argument that is presented, therefore, holds that forging a European Islam under the rules of secularism, without a radical interruption of the secular/religious division, and without referring its implication in the discourses of Orientalism and racism, is ultimately a reconsolidation of the authority of the self-same European.

With the theoretical framework and the basic arguments thus presented, Chapter 5 will go on bring together the dilemmas of the European civilizational legacy and the problematization of European Islam into an analysis of mosque conflicts in European cities, by taking mosque conflicts as an interpretative framework for understanding the place of Islam in Europe. This last chapter will demonstrate that, despite an absence of interest in the available academic literature on mosque conflicts, the existence of an overarching discourse of Europeanness seems to structure the terms of the debates about the construction and place of mosques by immigrant Muslim minorities in European settings. Accordingly, the central question will be: "What are the dominant discourses through which mosques are accepted or rejected in European public space?" and three cases of conflicts will be analyzed: The notorious anti-minaret legislation in Switzerland; the contested *Central Mosque* in Cologne, Germany; and the controversial *Grand Mosque* in Marseilles, France. Cases in Germany and France are chosen because they are examples of "purpose-built" mega-mosques that are favored by the state. The referendum against the building of minarets in Switzerland is chosen because it represents a case in which immediate action is taken against the visibility of mosques.

CHAPTER 2

MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS IN EUROPE: ISSUES AND CONFLICTS

It is by now a frequent observation that the contemporary obsession with the idea of a European identity coincides with a period of uncertainty in Europe that is marked, among other things, by diminishing national sovereignties and increasingly pluralized societies as a result of the processes of globalization. However benign these might seem, critics suggest, efforts towards discovering the true essence of or consolidating a common identity for Europe reflect deep-seated anxieties about its cultural others, who are now closer more than ever.

Responses to the presence of Muslims in the postwar immigration period in Europe are often generalized under two categories. The first endorses explicitly mono-culturalist policies, which oscillate between full assimilation and partial integration, while the latter is more sensitive to differences, and espouses ideals of multiculturalism. However, as the concerns about the failure of integration on part of the Muslim immigrants become widespread, liberal multiculturalism eventually falls into disfavor, and the European scene is threatened by xenophobic right-wing groups which capitalize on “clash of civilizations” and “end of history” narratives. The prospects for finding a proper place for Muslims in Europe, who have by now abandoned dreams of returning to their ‘homeland,’ therefore seem to be limited in a global context characterized by fears of Islamic invasion and global terrorism.

2.1 Postwar Immigration

The presence of Islam in Europe is not a new phenomenon. Large-scale Muslim communities have settled in the continent throughout the course of history, while the social and economic interaction between Europe and Muslim societies is

perhaps as old as the history of Islam itself.[1] The current encounter between the Muslims and the West is draws on this long history characterized by conquest and colonization, as well as mutual learning and cooperation. The contemporary European experience with Muslims, meanwhile, is mainly related to the postwar reconstruction process. The first Muslims to settle in Europe were colonial soldiers who fought with the Allies against the Nazis, followed by workers recruited from Europe's colonial hinterland as a source of cheap labor to help rebuild the destitute postwar economy.

Initially, the Muslim background of immigrant workers was not an issue. Each state utilized its own political idioms in order to give a name to the overseas labor that contributed to the economic boom in the postwar period, such as "Gastarbeiter" or "Black," and differentiated the migrants mainly in terms of their economic status, race, or nationality instead of their cultural or religious norms.[2] Immigrants themselves, as mostly single, economically active adult males, thought of their situation only as a temporary sojourn. Their strategy was to work temporarily in Europe, send allowances to their families, and stay until they generated enough capital for a better future back home. Therefore, in the initial stages, Muslim identity of the immigrants was largely an *invisible* phenomenon, and "the general European public, with a few exceptions, was not aware of Islam's presence."[3] Accordingly, these groups were thought of only in the context of sociology of work or immigration until 1970's.[4]

In retrospect, the oil crisis in 1973 and the consequent economic recession emerge as the first milestone in the encounter between Europe and its Muslim immigrants. As labor needs changed, new laws were passed that restricted the flow of labor migration. This change also had severe consequences for the lives of immigrants

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[1] Jack Goody, *Islam in Europe* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004).

[2] Jocelyne Cesari, "Muslim Minorities in Europe: The Silent Revolution," in *Modernizing Islam: Religion in the Public Sphere in Europe and the Middle East*, ed. John L. Espozito and François Burgat, (London: Hurst & Co., 2003): 251.

[3] Shireen T. Hunter and Simon Serfaty, "Introduction," in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion*, ed. Shireen T. Hunter, (Wesport: Praeger, 2002): xiv.

[4] Gabriele Marranci, "Sociology and Anthropology of Islam: A Critical Debate," in *The New Blackwell Companion to Sociology of Religion*, ed. Bryan S. Turner, (Sussex: Blackwell, 2010): 374.

already in Europe. As guest worker programs were abandoned, thousands of immigrants who lost their jobs suddenly became "more of a burden than a boon" to the struggling European economy.[5]

This was around the time that the immigrant groups, unemployed and unable - or unwilling - to repatriate to their home countries, were joined by their families with the new reunion incentives. Family reunification gradually transformed the groups' profile. Neither predominantly male nor working, the groups were also no longer, with new generations born in Europe, exclusively 'immigrant.' Eventually, the transformation of migration dynamics, coupled with a growing sense that the immigrants' presence in Europe would be permanent, led to a process of Muslim identity formation and assertion.[6]

Jörgen Nielsen notes that this was expected, since Muslim immigrants had also "brought with them the religious and political tendencies of their origins, and the movements and organizations of their countries of origin followed them to Europe."[7] On the other hand, Gilles Kepel emphasizes the sensitiveness of this transitional settlement period, which is "conducive to various forms of redefinition of identity arising out of both the newness of settlement and of the related phenomena of social exclusion," in the context of which the reaffirmation of Islamic identities developed in Europe. He stresses that it was not a straightforward return to the forms of traditional identities. The affirmation of an Islamic identity was rather shaped by a process of selection and adaptation of features "which have proved appropriate to the organization and structuring of the groups in the host country."[8]

Having abandoned the dreams of returning to homeland, the newly emerging Muslim communities began to assert their presence more visibly in the European

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[5] Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Tyler Golson, "Overhauling Islam: Representation, Construction, and Cooption of "Moderate Islam" in Western Europe," *Journal of Church and State* 49, no. 3 (2007): 490.

[6] Hunter and Serfaty, "Introduction," in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion*, xiv.

[7] Jörgen Nielsen, *Towards a European Islam* (London: MacMillan, 1999): 6.

[8] Gilles Kepel, "Islamic Groups in Europe: Between Community Affirmation and Social Crisis.," in *Islam in Europe: The Politics of Religion and Community*, ed. Steven Vertovec and Ceri Peach, (London: MacMillan, 1997): 49.

public sphere. A plethora of social institutions were established in order to cater to the needs of Muslim communities, and act as mediators with the local authorities. This was in part because of the relatively new responsibilities of rearing families in non-Islamic environments.[9] As Nielsen observes, "the context into which Muslim families settled in Europe was one where nothing could be taken for granted in terms of access to Islamic facilities." Therefore, matters that were readily taken care of back at home, such as provision of facilities for prayer, or access to *halal* food and proper burial, "had to be consciously sought out."[10]

Muslim immigrants' organization was further facilitated by their growing familiarity with administrative structures, as well as the assertive role of a generation of Muslims born and raised in Europe. As Muslims more effectively organized themselves to engage with local administrations and national bureaucratic regimes, they began to address a wider list of social and political issues. These include the construction of mosques and other facilities, the pursuit of religious education, as well as gaining official recognition and political representation. These issues are in turn are related to variable contexts different countries: National political discourses; nature of the historical relationship between religion and the state in different countries and its regulation; policies concerning foreigners, immigrants, and minorities; populist discourses of anti-immigration; and expressions of prejudices and cultural racism specifically directed against Islam.

As a result of the increase in the number and the "social visibility" of Muslims due to organized claims-making, "a dynamic process of challenge and response has been operating in European-Muslim relations, eliciting different responses from both sides, at times including confrontation and violence."[11] This has meant that the former 'immigrants' now turned into 'Muslims' in the general perception, and began to experience problems of integration.[12] In 1980's, then, Islam began to emerge as a key social issue between immigrants and their host countries in Europe.

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[9] Jörgen Nielsen, *Towards a European Islam*, 25-30.

[10] Jörgen Nielsen, *Muslims in Western Europe* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992): 119.

[11] Hunter and Serfaty, "Introduction," in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion*, xiv.

[12] Jocelyne Cesari, "Muslim Minorities in Europe: The Silent Revolution," 251.

1989 marked another important turning point for the strained relations between Muslims and Europeans, when the term "Islamic" became more pervasive in a derogatory sense in public discussions, with the outbreak of the "Rushdie Affair" in Britain and *l'affair du foulard* in France.[13] Anxieties about Islamic radicalism also seemed to grow in response to the political turmoil in the Middle East, which resurrected the deep-seated fears of Islam and its depiction as a violent totalitarian ideology. In response to these events, in order to eliminate potential threats posed by "unassimilated migrants," European states began to initiate progressive policies aimed at integrating Muslims into their particular national cultures.

In the picture today, increasing numbers of Muslims from different countries, characterized by a vast variety of languages, ethnic cultures and religious traditions – in addition to differences in gender, class-position, citizenship status, etc. – are trying to live as minorities under diverging regimes of governance of religious diversity, which are nevertheless deeply rooted in a European Enlightenment tradition. This picture is moreover embedded in an increasingly transnational context, which encompasses dynamics of migration, diasporas, and of increasingly global public spaces.[14]

There is a wide consensus on the fact that the contemporary diversity of Muslims in Europe makes it problematical to undertake a sociology of Western European Muslims as such, although some scholars argue that it is nevertheless possible to articulate a political sociology of "Muslim mobilization" in Europe. The tendency, therefore, is to approach this new social movement as "politics of religion and community," rather than delimiting it as identity politics, in order to emphasize the fact that large numbers of Muslims do indeed mobilize for recognition "as Muslims

[13] Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993): 239-306; Tariq Modood, "British Asian Muslims and the Rushdie Affair," *Political Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (1990): 143-160; John R. Bowen, *Why the French Don't Like Headscarves* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

[14] John R. Bowen, "Beyond Migration: Islam as a Transnational Public Space," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30, no. 5 (2004): 879-894.

and as an 'Islamic community,'" and "engage in wider public sphere in order to advance group specific causes."[15]

"Islamization" and "re-Islamization" are other widely used terms that aim to capture the increasing visibility of Muslim presence both in Europe and in the transnational arena. John Esposito, for instance, holds that while Islam has always been a visible and dynamic force in Muslim societies, it has reemerged as a "major political and social force" in response to new experiences of Muslims worldwide. This approach emphasizes the fact that "re-Islamization" takes place in an environment characterized by a perceived failure of the modern state to uphold social justice, and the social dislocation due to rapid urbanization and global migration flows. Overall, this leads to a desire on part of Muslims to reaffirm their faith and identity in Western-oriented societies, and while attempting to redefine a minority identity in non-Muslim majority contexts.[16]

Oussama Cherribi explicates that re-Islamization has occurred in a European context wherein religious leadership replaced the left-wing "secular elite" leadership of migrant organizations. He observes that until 1980's, the elite representatives tended to favor integration through complete Westernization in order to gain government support, and used to regard mosques and imams as reactionary forces that worked for the agenda of the Islamic countries of origin. Now, however, there appears to be a wider convergence between the elites and religious leaders about the importance of maintaining Islamic identities.[17]

In general, scholars point to several major developments that have affected Muslims in Europe. First of all, despite the diversity of interests, there is an overall growth of Muslim communities. Secondly, there is an increasing visibility of Islam in public space through everyday practices. These culminate in the creation of Islamic institutions, since thoughts of permanence have stimulated awareness of the need

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[15] Steven Vertovec and Ceri Peach, "Introduction," in *Islam in Europe: The Politics of Religion and Community*, ed. Steven Vertovec and Ceri Peach, (London: MacMillan, 1997): 10.

[16] John L. Esposito, "Introduction," in *Modernizing Islam: Religion in the Public Sphere in Europe and Middle East*, ed. John L. Esposito and François Burgat, (London: Hurst & Co., 2003): 2-13.

[17] Oussama Cherribi, "The Growing Islamization of Europe," in *Modernizing Islam: Religion in the Public Sphere in Europe and Middle East*, ed. John L. Esposito and François Burgat, (London: Hurst & Co., 2003): 193

for a variety of forms of religious expression. Collective struggles and political mobilization, therefore, often aim at the construction of mosques for collective prayer, prayer facilities in workplaces and schools, religious education, and the formation of formal associations for facilitating collective rights and bargaining with the government.[18]

An important dimension of the relationship between Muslims and their European hosts concerns various aspects of Islamic practice that have become controversial. The provision of *halal* food in schools and public institutions, for instance, tends to bring together animal rights activists and extreme rightists in a discourse of "throat-slitting of French sheep by immigrants" against the practice of ritual slaughter. Islamic cemeteries, burial without a coffin, and speedy issuing of death certificates are among other requests. Muslim associations also lobby with regard to matters of education, such as single sex education, modest dress, limitation of or excuse from physical education classes, accommodating prayer times and religious holidays in schools' timetable. There are also requests for Islamic schools, which are supported by only a few states. Nevertheless, religious education for the young goes on in supplementary schools in mosques and at home.[19]

In sum, as Muslims struggle between the choices of assimilating, integrating, or dissenting and remaining apart, they have also started to "change the face of Europe."[20] On the one hand, their uprooted position as a minority in Europe has affected the ways in which Muslims raise demands, make claims, and act collectively in order to change the existing norms and policies – to the point where they begin to assert a challenge the policies regarding the accommodation of religious diversity at both national and European levels.[21]

2.2 Multiculturalism and Its Discontents

In Europe, the passage from a perception of immigration understood only as a temporary economic phenomenon to one that sees it as a more permanent social

[18] *Ibid*., 196-199.

[19] Vertovec and Peach, "Introduction," in *Islam in Europe,* 24-25.

[20] John L. Esposito, "Introduction," in *Modernizing Islam,* 11.

[21] Veit Bader, "The Governance of Islam in Europe: The Perils of Modelling," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33, no. 6 (2007): 872.

presence coincides with the introduction of the term "multiculturalism." European states have recognized the need for progressive policies for facilitating immigrant integration, when the rising awareness of increasingly pluralized societies as a result of immigration were accompanied by anxieties about growing divisions among the society, vanishing values and norms, and declining social trust and civic participation.

While recent analyses also highlight the institutionalization of religious governance at the previously neglected European Union level,[22] studies on the accommodation of Muslim immigrants in Europe almost always emphasize cross-national comparisons, which show that Church-State relations, national identities, political opportunity structures, and policy initiatives in different European countries lead to distinctive patterns of Muslim incorporation.[23]

Within the broad spectrum of specific experiences in dealing with the question of cultural difference, two approaches are generally identified. To start with, "culture-blind" approaches are characterized by the tendency to relegate cultural differences into the private realm, and assume absolute separation of cultural and political identity. These can result in mono-culturalist policies that tend to focus on integration strategies. In this sense, assimilation is not really a possibility because citizenship is defined on the basis of national identity, which in turn is coterminous with ethnic descent. This approach is extremely contested due to its explicitly exclusivist and parochial emphases, and its failure to recognize the plurality of societies.

Republican multiculturalism slightly differs from mono-culturalism with its recognition of the reality of diversity, albeit at the pre-political domain of private sphere. The Enlightenment principle of anticlericalism forecloses the possibility of any public recognition of cultural difference in the domain of civil society, as the emphasis on republican values of the constitution necessitates the absolute

[22] Mattias Koenig, "Europeanising the Governance of Religious Diversity: An Institutionalist Account of Muslim Struggles for Public Recognition," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33, no. 6 (2007): 911-932.

[23] Jocelyne Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet* (London: Palgrave, 2004); Joel S. Fetzer and J. Christopher Soper, *Muslims and the State in Britain, France and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

neutrality of the state with respect to all forms of particularistic identities. As exemplified by the French paradigm, this approach tends to focus on coercive assimilationist policies, which demand minorities to deny their cultural traditions in order to "become French." What is important is to note is that although seemingly "culture-blind," both of these approaches involve either an implicit or an explicit privileging of the cultural identity of the majority.

On the other hand, what can be called "culture-sensitive" approaches explicitly recognize the reality of cultural diversity, and oscillate between liberal and communitarian ideals with respect to the governance of difference. The extreme standpoint is the now abandoned "pillarization" model, which was devised to accommodate the two religious traditions in the Netherlands and was extended to other religious groups in 1983.[24] The problem in this model was that it was intended to be a means of negotiating the main "pillars" of the society and was ineffective in dealing with groups with lesser influence. Another major problem was that it only recognized religious differences and was considered to clash with the principles of secularism.

Liberal multiculturalism, meanwhile, is based on the recognition, instead of the preservation, of differences. Its basic premise is the neutrality of the shared public domain, and the production of a 'common way of life' into which all immigrants will one day be assimilated. This assimilation in the form of 'unity in diversity' seems to be less coercive than the republican tradition, but the paradox remains that liberal democracy, which is based on the principle of equality, and multiculturalism, which espouses diversity, are not really compatible.

A more communitarian model of multiculturalism departs from the liberal model in that it allows a certain compromise in the neutrality of the state with the aim of minimizing social exclusion. The state, therefore, actively encourages groups to retain their cultural identity, which refers to what Charles Taylor identifies as the "politics of recognition." Taylor is opposed to the classic liberal stance with its emphasis on assimilation, since he asserts that political identity must rest on a

[24] Nico Landman, "Islam in the Benelux Countries," in *Islam: Europe's Second Religion*, ed. Shireen Hunter, 97-120 (Westport: Praeger, 2002).

particular cultural identity, which the state must officially recognize.[25] What makes communitarian multiculturalism distinctive and highly controversial from a liberal standpoint, however, is that it seeks to grant collective rights for culturally defined groups.

A yet different version of the politics of recognition endorses a tacit recognition of dominant cultural groups, yet under a liberal discourse of tolerance. British multiculturalism is the epitome of this approach, which derives from the colonial history and emphasizes the peaceful coexistence of groups rather than a formal policy of active empowerment. As Will Kymlicka points out, however, a major source of problem with this approach is the differential status of immigrants and colonized peoples. As the whole system is based on the premise of justifying group-differentiated rights to the colonized who have suffered historical grievances**,** the question remains whether such rights can be extended to ethnic immigrant groups who are perceived to have "willfully" joined the society in order to "benefit from it."[26]

Looking at the profusion of multicultural practices in different contexts, what is important to emphasize is that debates about multiculturalism and the integration of Muslim immigrants are played out as Europe is growing increasingly apprehensive about transnational Islamist movements and the prospect of "homegrown terrorists" in its midst. Manifest in the general pattern of interactions between the states and Muslim immigrants since the turn of the century is a "growing concern about a foreign-dominated Islamic presence in increasingly secular European society, growing willingness to solve 'the Islamic problem' through public policy," and a "general tendency to see Muslim self-expression as a 'temporary' phenomenon best dealt with through reactive legislation and police action."[27]

The accommodation or integration of "Muslim immigrants" into the polity as "permanent members" thus becomes a high-priority issue throughout Europe,

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[25] Charles Taylor, "Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutmann, 25-74 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

[26] Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995): 95.

[27] Haddad and Golson, "Overhauling Islam," 493.

particularly in response to transnational dynamics. Since the 1980's, the figure of the immigrant has come to signify not only the detrimental effects of migration on domestic integration, but also of the threat of foreign invasion. Jef Huysmans identifies this as a certain "securitization of migration," whereby migrants are excluded from the mainstream society "not just as aliens but as aliens who are dangerous to the reproduction of the social fabric." Ultimately, this discourse reproduces the political myth that "a homogeneous national community or western civilization existed in the past and can be re-established today through the exclusion of those migrants who are identified as cultural aliens."[28]

Meanwhile, politicization of migration has reactivated the memories of a "haunting past" of extreme nationalism and xenophobia. Interestingly, the migration policy developed in the EU is ambivalent in the way it deals with this fear. On the one hand, Europeanization of migration policy sustains, albeit implicitly, the negative image of the immigrant as an acute problem that challenges social and political stability. On the other hand, debates about multiculturalism at the level of the EU are also motivated precisely by a fear of the "return of the old Europe." There is also an extreme condemnation of exclusionist, discriminatory, and xenophobic reactions because European integration is basically a multicultural project supporting the cohabitation of different nationalities in a shared social economic and political space. From the very start, however, a multicultural project has its own dangers in the present European context, as it always "risks slipping into a reductionism that politicizes migrants predominantly via their cultural identity."[29]

At the core of the idea that immigrants should be integrated is a certain perception that their presence is neither culturally nor religiously "neutral." In debates about multiculturalism, it has often been pointed out that immigrants tend to bring along what has been called their "cultural baggage," that is, their particular ways of life, traditions, moral systems, and symbolic universes. The cultural baggage of Muslims, furthermore, is perceived to be particularly and utterly at odds with European values and ways of life.

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[28] Jef Huysmans, "The European Union and the Securitization of Migration," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 38, no. 5 (2000): 758

[29] *Ibid*., 766-767.

Such "culturalist" assumptions on which multiculturalism is based have been subject to severe criticism. A major source of criticism focuses on the ambiguity of the concept of culture itself. With the onset of postmodern, postcolonial, and postmodern interventions, the definition of the term and its usefulness as an object of study has become a conundrum, particularly in the discipline of anthropology. Thus, the essentialist definitions of culture, which take it as a static artifact of historical determination that presents a readily identifiable set of traits and norms, bounded to a particular place and time, has largely been challenged.[30]

Criticism focuses not only on the definition of culture as such, but also the extent of its assumed role in shaping individuals' lives. Most of these interventions contest "cultural determinism," which assumes culture to be a totalizing system that is transmitted unproblematically between generations and is deterministic of individual and collective behavior. One of the major flaws of culturalism inherent in identity recognition prevalent in the integration discourses and practices throughout Europe is that it has had the paradoxical effect of alienating rather than incorporating minorities.[31]

The differential treatment of migrants and minorities in multiculturalism is often criticized for challenging the liberal conception of individual rights and thus having the adverse effect of undermining the liberal state's capacity to maintain social cohesion. The collective claims-making of minorities is seen as a central aspect of this challenge, which leads to a cacophony of conflicts such as those concerning language rights, regional autonomy, political representation, education curriculum, land claims, and immigration policies. As Will Kymlicka asserts, "finding morally defensible and politically viable answers to these issues is the greatest challenge facing democracies today."[32]

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[30] James Clifford and George E. Marcus, *Writing Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); Lila Abu-Lughod, "Writing Against Culture," in *Racapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, ed. Richard Fox, 137-162 (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1991); Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, "Beyond Culture," *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992): 6-23.

[31] Sharam Alghasi, Thomas H. Eriksen and Halleh Ghorashi, "Introduction," in *Paradoxes of Cultural Recognition: Perspectives from Northern Europe*, ed. Sharam Alghasi, Thomas H. Eriksen and Halleh Ghorashi, 1-18 (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

[32] Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, 1.

Meanwhile, it is important to note that collective claims for cultural group rights are central to the everyday survival of migrants and ethnic minorities. Put simply, the dilemma can be summarized as follows:

> For opponents of further immigration, this is a result of the (too) strong cultural differences of recent, non-European migrants, which put strain on both the migrants' adaptive capabilities and the host society's integrative capacities. From the point of view of advocates of a multicultural citizenship, it reflects the fact that exclusion in modern societies is primarily a result of discrimination or biases against groups' cultural difference, and is no longer primarily a function of socioeconomic inequality and a lack of social and political citizenship rights.[33]

Ironically, then, in both multiculturalist endorsement of collective identities and culturalist discourses against migration, Muslims are often represented as a "pure product of their religion." In his historical overview of the study of Islam in anthropology and sociology, Gabriele Marranci identifies a particular tendency to see Islam "as the blueprint on which Muslim society, seen as a monolithic entity, and the 'Muslim mind,' seen as a product of cultural and social structures and functions, were built upon."[34] Such Orientalist accounts, Marranci contends, are also prevalent in the studies of contemporary Islam in Europe, such that "many of the theories and frameworks which were developed to understand the 'exotic' Islam are now used to explain 'Islamic fundamentalism.'"[35] As a result, popular and academic discourses on Islam in Europe tend to perceive religion as the main element that prevents Muslims from integrating within the "modern," "civilized," and "secular" Western democracies. The key challenge to this perception tends to focus on the internal multiplicity of Islam as a heterogeneous product of embodied power relations. Thus, critics argue, "it is not Islam that shapes Muslims, but rather

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[33] Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham, "Challenging the Liberal Nation-State? Postnationalism, Multiculturalism and the Collective Claims Making of Immigrants in Britain and Germany," *The American Journal of Sociology* 105, no. 3 (1999): 658.

[34] Gabriele Marranci, "Sociology and Anthropology of Islam," 367.

[35] *Ibid*., 365.

Muslims who, through discourses, practices, beliefs and actions, shape Islam in different times and spaces."[36]

Furthermore, when culture is reduced to an artifact that is assumed to be "possessed" by its "members" who constitute a "community," the next assumption is that a representative leader or body can be formed in order to seek the interests of a minority culture or community. One of the political ramifications of such culturalism is the request on part of European states for a common Muslim representative body, which can legitimately make claims or voice concerns on behalf of Muslims in the public sphere. "The pressure imposed on Muslim organizations by European official, legal, political and bureaucratic expectations," as Nielsen points out, "is such that Islam has to become an *ethnic identity*."[37]

In fact, however, despite the existence of several state-sponsored attempts at the formation of national representative bodies, the formation of a European-wide common front for Islam seems far from feasible. Coming up with a clearly demarcated group, like that of a Church or an ethnic representative association to cover all of Europe's Muslims has proved impossible due to the sheer diversity and the lack of congruity between interests. Jeffrey Escoffier finds fault in the erasure of dissent in communitarian representations, and suggests that the multicultural project offers only a limited possibility of representation "as long as it is unable to create a framework that allows for the emergence of new, more multifaceted political identities and new forms of dialogue."[38]

Eventually, a particular disillusionment with cultural relativism, based on the idea of "emancipating" designated minorities within their own parallel institutions, and the concomitant failure of integration projects have perpetuated the sense of a "crisis of multiculturalism" throughout Europe. When "culture-specific" practices, such as forced marriages, honor killings, or female genital mutilation, clash with modern humanist values, attention shifts from the virtues to the vices of multiculturalist tolerance.

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[36] *Ibid*., 368.

[37] Jörgen Nielsen, *Muslims in Western Europe*, 124. Emphasis in the original.

[38] Jeffrey Escoffier, "The limits of Multiculturalism," *Socialist Review* 21, no. 3 (1991): 61-73.

Interestingly, anti-immigration rightist groups and feminists have appeared as "strange bedfellows" in their shared critique of multiculturalism.[39] In their accounts, multiculturalist tolerance is a misguided project that reinforces "parallel lives," creates an "ethnic underclass," and is especially detrimental to women due to its pervasive indifference to patriarchal and misogynist practices. One of the most vocal advocates of this standpoint has been Unni Wikan, who argues that the Norwegian authorities practice "foolish generosity" by supporting the power of Muslim men, and by providing welfare without expecting anything in return. This, she contends, is "doing evil in the name of good."[40] It is crucial to emphasize, however, that underlying the positioning of feminism and multiculturalism as opposed projects[41] is a certain assumption that minority women are victims of their violent cultures. This assumption, Leti Volpp forcefully argues, is achieved by a discursive strategy that constructs gender subordination as integral only to certain cultures, therefore contributing to their exclusion and disadvantaged positions in society.[42]

It should also be noted that the much criticized tendency towards community formation on part of the Muslim immigrants takes place in an environment that is itself in a convoluted process of being "de-communitized" at various levels. The process of Europeanization, which has evolved from a self-definition in terms of a common market, towards an "economic community," and finally a "European Union," has introduced its own set of problems related to diminished nation-state sovereignty and the democratic deficiency of supranational governments. Despite popular references to a "unity in diversity," these problems are in turn related to the absence of a common community – a European "we, the people" as such – upon which sovereignty can be based.[43] If "perpetual peace" and social equality are the

[39] Sherene H. Razack, "Imperilled Muslim Women, Dangerous Muslim Men and Civilized Europeans," *Feminist Legal Studies* 12 (2004): 129-174.

[40] Unni Wikan, *Generous Betrayal: Politics of Culture in the New Europe* (Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 2002).

[41] Susan Moller Okin, "Is Multiculturalism Bad For Women?," in *Is Multiculturalism Bad For Women? Susan Moller Okin With Respondents*, ed. Joshua Cohen, Matthew Howard and Martha Nussbaum, 7-24 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

[42] Leti Volpp, "Feminism versus Multiculturalism," *Columbia Law Review* 12, no. 2 (2001): 1089-2000.

[43] Etienne Balibar, *We, the People of Europe?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

basic premises upon which the drive for unification was based, they are now being challenged by the problem of cultural difference.

Due to the reasons discussed above, multiculturalism now appears as an antiquated model that is unfit to deal effectively with the problems of plural societies. Politicians all over Europe, especially those on the right, are therefore eager to declare on every possible occasion that "multiculturalism is dead." Most recently, for example, German Chancellor Angela Merkel caused an uproar with her bitter remark: "The approach to build a multicultural society (to live side-by-side and to enjoy each other) has failed, utterly failed." In the rest of her speech to the conservative Christian Democratic Party, Merkel's basic message was that although Germany still needs its immigrant labor, "migrants should not merely be encouraged, more demands should be made from them." The Chancellor further acknowledged that Islam has become a part of German society, but Muslim migrants themselves "need to do something to get into the society," such as learning the language and abiding by the German constitution."[44]

As exemplified in Merkel's speech, there is now a growing consensus that because multiculturalist policies have largely been based on the premise of liberal tolerance rather than of active participation in citizenship, they have endorsed a passive containment of particularities rather than integration. An important question to consider at this point is related to the new kinds of state policy that are emerging in the current context to deal with the governance of plurality and regulation of immigration. In addressing this question, Eric Bleich distinguishes between three overlapping types of state responses: Policies that aim to deflect, to repress, and/ or to integrate migrants. In his study of six countries, Bleich shows that each of the countries examined demonstrates a balance between these three elements.[45]

On the whole, however, the major consequence of the disappointment with multiculturalism has been a noticeable shift from tolerant policies towards those

[44] Junge Union, "Merkel: Ansatz für Multikulti 'absolut gescheitert'," *Zeit*. November 16, 2010, http://www.zeit.de/news-102010/16/iptc-bdt-20101016-32-26836562xml (accessed November 30, 2010).

[45] Eric Bleich, "State Responses to 'Muslim' Violence: A Comparison of Six West European Countries," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35, no. 3 (2009): 361-379.

that emphasize civic participation, which characteristically expect more from migrants in the process of integration. There are a few important points to underline with regard to the logic of civic integration. First of all, the turn to civic integration is brought about by a "seismic shift… from the neglect to the affirmation of one's own culture." As Joppke notes, although this theme has largely been aggravated by the rise of right-wing populism across Europe, the "distemper with multiculturalism" should not be underrated as a marginal reaction from extreme groups. To the extent that the majority culture invoked in this re-affirmation is not defined on parochial terms, but instead as one that asks for obligatory civic adjustments on part of the immigrants, it is also a "liberal distemper."[46]

Secondly, with the new emphasis on civic integration, states are becoming more demanding about their liberal principles and less reluctant to compromise them under the "cloak of multicultural toleration." In this perspective, liberalism appears as a distinct "way of life" that clashes with other, non-liberal ways of life.[47] Paradoxically, however, civic integration policies are themselves illiberal due to their obligatory character. Precisely because liberalism's basic principles of freedom and equality presuppose that "members of the polity possess the necessary reasoning powers… to plan for their future," there is a tendency to resort to illiberal attitudes towards those who do not meet these criteria. In an important sense, therefore, these attitudes are not derived from "sources extrinsic to liberalism, such as nationalism or racism, but are inherent in liberalism itself."[48]

Third, the emerging practices of immigrant integration throughout Europe show a peculiar coexistence of civic integration and anti-discrimination policies. Although these are complementary approaches that address the initial and the later phases of migration, they also exhibit contradictory dynamics. On the one hand, civic integration is driven by a strict neoliberal logic that fuels economic globalization itself, according to which migrants are treated as individuals who are largely responsible for taking the decision to migrate, or for the success or failure of their

[46] Christian Joppke, "The Retreat of Multiculturalism in the Liberal State: Theory and Policy," *The British Journal of Sociology* 55, no. 2 (2004): 249.

[47] Christian Joppke, "Transformation of Immigrant Integration: Civic Integration and Antidiscrimination in the Netherlands, France, and Germany," *World Politics* 59, no. 2 (2007): 252.

[48] *Ibid*., 248.

integration. On the other hand, the opposite logic of anti-discrimination depicts migrants as members of groups that are victimized by the mainstream society. In the later phases of integration, therefore, an "ameliorative group logic that had been discarded at its beginning by the harsh individualism of civic integration" is being reintroduced.[49]

According to Joppke, the coexistence of these two approaches reveals that the "liberal mantra of two-way integration," according to which both the migrants and the receiving societies are supposed to be engaged in mutual change, actually consists of two separate one-way processes. In the first instance, the burden of change falls completely on the migrants, and later, completely on the society. In an important sense, this dualism subtly reinforces the logic of incremental rights, in that rights are obtained in relation to the length of stay, since migrants' initial entry into the new society is considered precarious and they are rather assumed to gradually "earn" the rights of permanent membership. This logic is what makes European experience with immigrant integration unique, in that in other immigrant receiving countries, legal immigrants are considered already fully functioning members of the society.[50]

Finally, Joppke particularly emphasizes that this new assertiveness of the states regarding the "liberal minimum," which requires immigrants to at least learn the language of their receiving societies and be committed to liberal democratic principles, is becoming a widespread phenomenon throughout Europe. As liberal nation-states are themselves increasingly marked by de-ethnicization, various national labels suggest "only different names for the same thing, the liberal creed of liberty and equality." In this sense, "distinct national models of dealing with immigrants are giving way to convergent policies" in response to the crisis of integration. Joppke does not mean, however, that there now exists one pattern. His argument rather aims to challenge historical institutionalism and path dependence perspectives, which assume that national policy trajectories have static patterns.

[49] *Ibid*., 249.

[50] *Ibid*.

Due to the existence of a meta-narrative of Europeanness based on liberal values, therefore, integration policies can no longer be explained adequately by referring to nation-specific philosophies of integration. As discussed above, the apparent lack of integration among Muslim immigrants has caused a security alarm all over Europe, and precipitated in an extreme skepticism about the premises and effects of multiculturalism. In this environment, the primary concern is no longer multicultural diversity. As it is also no longer possible to aspire towards mono-cultural societies, the emphasis has rather shifted towards a concern about the Muslim immigrants' *loyalty*, especially when multiculturalism and transnational linkages are perceived to be encouraging an ambiguity of commitment. As will be discussed in the following chapters, the central terms in this bargain about loyalties is the narrative of Europeanness based on modernity and secularism.

CHAPTER 3

TOWARDS A EUROPEAN EUROPE?

Europe must become open to cultural interruption.
Without this there is only the past.
Through it, the opportunity of redeeming
the hopes of the past.[51]

European search for its own identity is not a simple backdrop against which the dynamics of immigrant integration are played out. To the contrary, the very terms of the narrative of "Europe" and the posited values of "Europeanness" structure the terms of the debate. Paying heed to Talal Asad's assertion that "the problem of understanding Islam in Europe is primarily a matter of understanding how 'Europe' is conceptualized by Europeans,"[52] this chapter will start with a discussion of Europe as an idea and a discourse, and problematize the search for a common European identity.

Evidently, Europe as a political project and a symbolic space is more complicated than a system of legal norms. The main focus of this chapter will, therefore, be on the "idea" of Europe rather than the particular problems of unification dynamics. Meanwhile, in the last few decades, there has indeed been a proliferation of social scientific studies that investigate the historical development of the idea of Europe. Such extensive academic interest, however, itself participates in creating an amalgam of identification. Since the general aim of this thesis is to analyze the discourses of power that define Europeanness as such and demarcate the limits of

[51] Kevin Robins, "Interrupting Identities: Turkey/ Europe," in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, (London: Sage, 2003): 82.

[52] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular.* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003): 159.

belonging, instead of rehearsing the history of Europe in detail since the Greeks until the present day, this chapter will rather problematize precisely this logic of historicity by identifying the common strategies and themes in various historical approaches.

Following a discussion of Europe as an idea, a set of two interrelated questions will be identified, which appear extensively in the critical debates about European identity. The first question, "How did Europe become European?" investigates the past for the inter-civilizational dynamics that have contributed to the production of Europe as a political and cultural entity. The second question, "How European is Europe?" meanwhile, emphasizes the diversity in the continent, and tries to relate the present state of matters to a more utopian ideal of Europe. These two inquiries constantly inform each other in the critical assessment of Europe's cultural and political borders.

Given the intricate relationship between colonialism, racism, and the European civilizational narrative, positing a "unity in diversity" in Europe necessitates an erasure of its colonial past on the one hand, and its own history of antagonisms and traumatic experiences on the other. This is further related to the fact that Europe as a project, to be accepted as such, must provide a "better alternative" to the present order. The most remarkable feature of the current discourses on Europe, therefore, is the effort to invent a new "exemplary" identity that is "good and noble," while "awakening history to its proper end" in order to pretend that it has been thus all along.

3.1 Europe as a Discourse and an Idea: The Legacy

The landmark statements and treaties of the European Union over the last five decades emphasize the fact that the project of European integration as a set of political and economic reforms must be mobilized by, and would fail miserably in the absence of, a cultural commons that defines the basis of political belonging. Intensification of efforts towards European integration has thus been largely accompanied by a growing concern for locating the roots of Europeanness. The definition of this European identity recurs in the form of perennial ideas of Europe, which invoke the history of a shared past and the myth of common origins.

As discussed in the previous chapter, scholars frequently observe that the contemporary "identity talk" in Europe began in a time of crisis. Indeed, the current fascination with the concept of European identity can be traced back to the economic crisis in early 1970's. It then became even more influential as a mobilizing metaphor at the end of 20th century, particularly in the wake of 1989. After a series of 'Islamic crises,' the environment in Europe was increasingly characterized by doubts towards the benefits of exporting immigrant labor, fears of Islamic invasion, lack of feelings of community, and ultimately a growing skepticism about the merits of European expansion. The concept of European identity thus replaced "integration" as a buzzword when the "very legitimacy of the European integration was at stake,"[53] and was invoked not only as economic reform but also as an instrument "to save the place of Europe" in a realigned world order.[54]

In looking at the plethora of popular discourses, however, the identity of Europe must not be regarded as a self-evident fact. Instead, emphasis must be placed on the ways in which Europe appears as an idea that proclaims "a normative center," and operates as "a discourse that is translated into a political and ideological project," which is also involved in a constant process of negotiation and reconstruction.[55] In this sense, the idea of Europe is evidently more complex than the problems of unification dynamics.

Similarly, in his review of the current trends about the conceptualization of Europe, Gerard Delanty highlights the importance of distinguishing between the idea, the identity, and the reality of Europe in the attempts to trace the process by which Europe emerged as a cultural idea and was translated into a political identity. According to Delanty, Europe is more than a system of laws and institutions that regulate European citizenship, it is also "a symbolic space where projections and memories, the collective experiences and identifications of the people of Europe are

[53] Bo Strath, "Multiple Europes: Integration, Identity and Demarcation to the Other," in *Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other*, ed. Bo Strath, (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2000): 386.

[54] *Ibid*., 402

[55] Bo Strath, "Introduction: Europe as a Discourse," in *Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other* , ed. Bo Strath, (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2000): 14.

represented."[56] For the sake of concentrating critical attention on the tension that derives from the close relationship between discourses of Europeanness and the dynamics of European unification, therefore, the ideas of Europe should be analytically detached from the empirical realities of a united Europe.

From this perspective, the idea of Europe appears as the "central organizing metaphor of a complex civilization," – a civilization, furthermore, which has characteristically claimed a privileged position in a bid for uniqueness and universality. Precisely because European ideas and values still retain a normative thrust despite grave misgivings, engaging critically with the concept of Europe itself has become an urgent task. What is at stake is no less than presenting a challenge to the vision of Europe as an immutable ideal, by inquiring how "Europe became established as a reality for knowledge – a cultural idea – and how it subsequently lent itself to power."[57]

In the last few decades, there has been a noticeable proliferation of studies on the historical development of the idea of Europe, along with studies that identify the common trends in this growing academic interest. Among these, Pim den Boer delineates three different historical approaches that trace the development of the idea of Europe over time.[58] The most common approach traces the roots of the idea of Europe back to antiquity and focuses on its development throughout the Middle Ages into the modern era, and is characterized by three concepts: freedom, Christianity, and civilization. A second version emphasizes the pluralistic nature of the European civilization, and associates it with diversity, democracy and also with nationalism. According to Boer and many others, the idea of a common cultural identity leading to integration has only very recently come to the fore. Recent studies therefore tend to examine the history of Europe in reference to the trend in integration, so that the years since the Second World War occupy a central position.

In his study of the various works on the idea of Europe, Richard Swedberg has identified more specific elements that contribute to the understanding of Europe as

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[56] Gerard Delanty, "Conceptions of Europe: A Review of Recent Trends," *European Journal of Social Theory* 6, no. 4 (2003): 484.

[57] Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe* (London: MacMillan, 1995): 2-4.

[58] Pim den Boer, "Europe as an Idea," *European Review* 6, no. 4 (1998): 395-401.

a cultural entity. Various studies focus on Europe as a word with distinct etymology, as a concept in mythology, and as a geographical construct. Its historical development, furthermore, is studied in reference to particular periods in history. These involve Medieval Christianity; the era of Charlemagne as the 'Father of Europe'; peace plans of the 17th and 18th centuries; Napoleon's reign and his attempt to unify Europe; The Concert of Europe after the Congress of Vienna; the pessimistic interwar period; Hitler's Europe; resistance movements for a federal Europe during WWII; the revival of the European movement post-WWII; and finally, the creation of the European Union.[59]

In many versions, however, the effect in taking Europe as a predefined object of knowledge, even as a pluralistic one, is to envision it as a distinctive cultural entity united by shared values, culture, and identity. Nico Wilterdink summarizes the oft-cited foundations of this legacy that unites Europe:

> A conventional image situates the beginning (the 'cradle') of European civilization in Greek antiquity, which produced the values of individual dignity and critical, independent thought. After that follows Roman civilization, in which legal thought is developed to impressive heights, and in the bosom of which a third tradition emerges: the tradition of Christianity, which specifically emphasizes community spirit. Some authors add a fourth tradition: the tradition of the Renaissance, Reason and Enlightenment, in which the secular ideals of rationalism and humanitarianism are developed.[60]

More often than not, the classical Greco-Roman civilization, Christianity, and the Enlightenment ideas of science, reason, progress and democracy are cited as the core elements of this legacy that Europe claims to hold. This historical view endorses an understanding that "the cultural unity of Europe is the result of old, continual, successive and mingling cultural traditions, which together produce a unique amalgam" and find their unique expression in basic principles such as those

[59] Richard Swedberg, "The Idea of 'Europe' and the Origin of the European Union: A Sociological Approach," *Zeitschrift fur Soziologie* 23 (1994): 381.

[60] Nico Wilterdink, "The European Ideal: An Examination of European and National Identity," *European Journal of Sociology* 34 (1993): 121.

of scientific rationality, human rights and democratic political institutions.[61] However, the ubiquitous teleological and deterministic logic that underpins this historical narrative of Europe should not be overlooked. Most importantly, it employs the progressive unfolding of the idea of Europe through a set of historical events that not only culminate in the European Union, but also legitimize the current state of affairs in reference to a shared past and an ideal future.

At this point, a few critical points become apparent. First of all, the narrative of Europe as found in the literature is first and foremost a "history of the victors," which altogether depicts the gradual advancement of a superior civilization, so that "the less honorable episodes" of violent internal conflicts and of colonialism disappear from view. As Heikki Mikkeli points out, this erasure makes possible "an almost organic story of the life of a being called Europe, developing as if determined by its genes."[62] What is most crucial, therefore, is to understand how Europe grew at the expense of others throughout its lifespan, and continues to do so by retaining the power to write its own history.

This is exactly what Bo Strath refers to when he asserts, "The meanings of Europe are a discourse of power on how to define and classify Europe, on the frontiers of Europe, and on similarities and differences."[63] Concomitant to defining the essence and the frontiers of Europe, this discourse operates by demarcating a distinct European self from the non-European, so that the idea of Europe gains salience in opposition to the Other. Instead of the unfolding of a pre-given, self-evident, and pre-destined entity, therefore, the narrative of Europe should be seen as a "long process of the historical embedding of self-images, images reflected in mirrors where the Other was constructed."[64]

Secondly, then, Europe as a historical construct has the function of invoking unity and peace in an otherwise conflict-torn and violent continent. Indeed, even when differences within Europe are emphasized, it is often in the form of unity in diversity. Religious and linguistic differences, for example, are seen as the essential

[61] *Ibid*.

[62] Heikki Mikkeli, *Europe as an Idea and Identity* (London: MacMillan, 1998): 243.

[63] Bo Strath, "Multiple Europes," 405.

[64] *Ibid*.

sources of cleavage in Europe, which altogether feed and sustain major ethnic conflicts.[65] Yet, thirdly, whereas the nationalist conflicts and the religious wars ultimately contribute to the diversity of Europe and enrich its history, the difference from the non-European is utterly irreconcilable. Historically, Europe as an idea has gained an aura of a privileged essence precisely due to its demarcation in space and time from those that are posited to be lacking in that essence. As Mikkeli pertinently remarks:

> Europe has, at different points in its history, been equated with civilization, Christianity, democracy, freedom, white skin, the temperate zone and the Occident. Correspondingly, its opposites have been identified as barbarianism, paganism, despotism, slavery, colored skins, the tropics and the Orient.[66]

Due to the internal and external divisions of the European self, then, the narrative of Europe based on a teleological and deterministic logic of historicity becomes highly problematical. Most importantly, tracing the determining features of a collective idea of Europe does not inscribe a linear, unproblematical history that could shed a light on what Europe is today. In other words, searching historical archives for the roots of an idea of Europe is specifically a "program of European self-identification," but cannot hope to overcome Europe's contemporary dilemmas. As Hayden White vehemently argues, what should be questioned is this

> …delusory notion that there exists a European identity that has to be simply uncovered by social scientific research in order to be grasped by Europeans and non-Europeans alike as the polar star that will guide them to a promised land where state violence and economic competitiveness can be practiced with honor.[67]

Instead of attempting to excavate a European essence that could legitimize a common identity, therefore, attention should rather be diverted to detecting, on the

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[65] Bo Strath, "A European Identity: To the Historical Limits of a Concept," *European Journal of Social Theory* 5, no. 4 (2002): 388.

[66] Heikki Mikkeli, *Europe as an Idea and Identity*, 230.

[67] Hayden White, "The Discourse of Europe and the Search for a European Identity," in *Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other*, ed. Bo Strath, (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2000): 68.

one hand, the shifting discursive practices that continuously articulate and rearticulate the identities of European and non-European and, on the other, the ways in which the name "Europe" still retains its normative hold.

3.2 (Re-)Writing Europe Today: The Dilemmas of European Legacy

The idea of Europe today is still invoked in the name of a civilizational mission, and functions as what White refers in the above quotation as the "polar star" that guides the way to a better future. This is manifest in an address given by Jacques Delors, the eighth president of the European Commission, to the College of Europe in Bruges in 1989:

> I find myself dreaming of a Europe… which tends its immense cultural heritage so that it bears fruit, a Europe which imprints the mark of solidarity on a world which is far too hard and too forgetful of its underdeveloped regions… the perennial values of Europe.[68]

As evident in this statement, such responsibility is based on the belief that history has unquestionably bequeathed Europe with a superlative legacy, which – if "tended to" – will thrive and be beneficial to the rest of the world. The mobilizing force of this notion persists in contemporary discussions, despite the obvious empirical weakness of the idea of Europe.[69] On the one hand, the weakness of the idea of Europe derives from the palpable diversity in the continent. Ironically, however, conflicts based on national, ethnic, and religious cleavages are themselves, to an important extent, the principal force behind the efforts towards unification. Europeanization as a project is vindicated specifically on the grounds that it delimits the sovereignty the nation-states, which have not hesitated to exert violence against people, including their own citizens, in their quest for power. Europeanization, therefore, offers a means of absolving the European conscious of the memories of the destruction of two World Wars, the horror of Holocaust, or the grave indifference to the genocide in Bosnia. In short, it offers a means to overcome the dark side of its modernity by holding on to the "perennial values of Europe." As

[68] Quoted in Ash Amin, "Multi-Ethnicity and the Idea of Europe," 5.

[69] Anthony Pagden, "Introduction," in *The Idea of Europe*, ed. Anthony Pagden, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 7.

Pagden puts it, the idea of modern Europe ultimately envisions a continent that, "if it only adheres to the principles of liberal democracy, will never again collapse into internal warfare."[70]

On the other hand, the idea of Europe is contested on the grounds that its superior civilization has been established via the plundering of other regions and peoples of the world throughout its colonial encounters. In this sense, the idea of Europe based on the conception of a "unity in diversity" involves not only a necessary forgetting of its own traumatic memories, but an erasure of its colonial past as well. In order to present Europe as a "better alternative" as the hallmark of peace and justice, the consequences of the civilizational mission as "white man's burden" must be interrogated. This calls for a pluralization of Europe whereby the exchange of knowledge, the acquisition of material wealth, and the achievement of civilizational superiority at the expense of others is acknowledged.

Meanwhile, this does not mean that a conception of Europe that confronts these issues will be able to entirely abandon notions of a superior legacy and aspirations of a civilizational mission. As will be discussed below, although cosmopolitan ideas of Europe attempt to counteract pervasive "clash of civilizations" perspective, and seek to contest the Eurocentric foundations inscribed in Europe's civilizational mission, these critical developments cannot easily escape the traps of such essentialist notions.

It is important to note that, despite their shortcomings, the idea of Europe and the ideals it inscribes cannot simply be dispensed with. Rather, as Michael Naas explains, what is at stake is articulating both "the dangers and the promises of a united Europe."[71] Re-writing or re-thinking the Europe today has therefore become an urgent task and the first step in that direction would be in asking the reasons why. Quite to this point, Ash Amin inquires, "Why should it matter that Europe reflects on what it is to be European, on who can lay claim to being European, on what Europe's common values should be?" He contends that:

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[70] *Ibid*.

[71] Michael Naas, *Derrida From Now On* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008): 82.

> Europe has a clear choice to make. It can deny the processes of cultural heterogeneity and hybridization daily at work and allow ethnicity-based antagonisms to grow, aided by an overarching white Europeanist ideal of the good life. Alternatively, it can recognize the coming Europe of plural and hybrid cultures and affiliations and seek to develop an imaginary of becoming European through engagement with the stranger…"[72]

The question of defining Europe today, then, is predicated on the recognition of heterogeneity and the notion of "becoming European," which needs to abandon *both* the essentialist acceptances *and* the simplistic dismissals of the 'European legacy.' This is why the "today" of Europe is significant. As Derrida asks, "Is there then a completely new 'today' of Europe beyond all the exhausted programs of *Eurocentricism* and *anti-Eurocentricism*, these exhausting yet unforgettable programs?"[73] This *aporia* is a deep undercurrent in the attempts to redefine Europe's cultural and political borders by engaging with its pasts and presents. If the "old Europe seems to have exhausted all the possibilities of discourse and counter-discourse about its own identification," and if "avowal, guilt, and self-accusation no more escape this old program than does the celebration of self,"[74] then the question remains: How can Europe acknowledge – rather than disavow, forget, or erase – the cruel consequences of its superiority, which are at odds with its cherished "perennial ideas," and still espouse the ideals under which such offences were exonerated? This presents two interrelated dilemmas.

3.3 Contesting Eurocentrism: "How did Europe become European?"

Upon close examination, the key element in the justification of the civilizational mission of Europe, as exemplified in Delors' statement above, is a hidden "if" clause. Implied in this subtle reservation is the fact that Europe's superior legacy is established at the economic and social disenfranchisement of those that it has colonized. As Frantz Fanon declares in a typically powerful statement, "Europe is

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[72] Ash Amin, "Multi-Ethnicity and the Idea of Europe," 4.

[73] Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992): 12. Emphasis in the original.

[74] *Ibid*., 27.

literally the creation of the Third World. The wealth which smothers her is that which was stolen from the underdeveloped peoples."[75] This facet of European history disappears from view in Eurocentric accounts, in which oppressive practices such as colonialism and imperialism are regarded as contingent cases, rather than as the major catalysts of Europe's disproportionate power. As Goldberg avers,

> Colonialism... is considered to have taken place elsewhere, outside of Europe, and so is thought to be the history properly speaking not of Europe. Colonialism, in this view, has had little or no effect in the making of Europe itself.[76]

Basically, the question "How did Europe become European?" is directed towards this disarticulated site. It involves a critique of the ways in which the European narrative, as Homi Bhabha puts it, "normalizes its own history of expansion and exploitation by inscribing the history of the other in a fixed hierarchy of civil progress."[77] In an attempt to destabilize this Eurocentric narrative, efforts tend to concentrate on hybridizing Europe by identifying inter-civilizational exchanges that have contributed to its development.

In his article "Unpacking the West: How European is Europe?" Jan Nederveen Pieterse maintains that explaining Europe's multicultural character solely in terms of the recent dynamics of immigration takes Europe at face value. What should be considered instead, he argues, is the extent to which European culture itself is historically multicultural.[78] With the interventions of postcolonial theory, decolonization of history has been a strong trend in the recent years, so that Eurocentric assumptions of historiography are challenged and the attention has shifted towards the contributions of the non-European world to the European civilization. Roger Garaudy, for example, has depicted Islam as the "third forgotten pillar of Europe," while Claus Leggewie has argues that "modern Europe should

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[75] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove, 2004 [1963]): 58.

[76] David Theo Goldberg, "Racial Europeanization," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29, no. 2 (2006): 336.

[77] Homi Bhabha, *Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2005): 136.

[78] Jan Nederveen Pieterse, "Unpacking the West: How European is Europe?" in *Racism, Modernity & Identity*, ed. Ali Rattansi and Sallie Westwood, (Cambridge: Polity, 1994): 129.

thank Arab-Islamic civilization for assistance in its very birth."[79]

A common strategy in correcting the long-standing misrepresentations of Europe as a unique and self-contained entity is to emphasize processes of pluralization or hybridization, so that

> Upon closer consideration, each of the celebrated stations of Europe… turns out to be a moment of cultural mixing: Greece, an outpost of Egyptian, Phoenician and Asian civilization; Rome, strongly indebted to Greece, Egypt and Carthage; Christianity, an Asian religion originally…; the Renaissance, a recovery of Hellenic civilization passed on through Arabic civilization and deeply engaged with non-European cultures; the Enlightenment, another period wide open to non-European influences from China to Egypt…"[80]

In their origin, then, what are normally taken to be uniquely European philosophies, political principles, technologies and even art forms seem to have sources outside Europe. There is, however, a structural negligence of the hybrid character of European culture due to the persistence of Eurocentric regimes of truth. One reason might be that various disciplines of the humanities and social sciences were established during the "gestation period" of European imperialism and colonialism.[81] The meta-narrative adopted by social sciences sustains a dichotomous division between Europe and non-Europe, according to which modern history is reduced to "a gradual and heroic Westernization of the world," without taking into account that, at least since the Western European colonial expansion, "different temporalities and histories have been irrecoverably yoked together."[82]

Since Europe shares its roots with other cultures, defining Europe as an original civilizational category necessitates that others are kept apart from the properties that

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[79] Steven Vertovec and Ceri Peach, "Introduction," 12.

[80] *Ibid*., 146.

[81] *Ibid.*, 130

[82] Stuart Hall, "When Was the Post-Colonial? Thinking at the Limit," in *The Postcolonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*, ed. Lidia Curti and Iain Chambers, (London: Routledge, 1996): 252.

define what is essential to Europe. In the context of the relationship between Europe and Islam, Talal Asad explicates that this is achieved by two gestures. First, Islam is depicted merely as a "carrier civilization," so that the material and intellectual contributions it "carries" to the European world are assumed not to be essentially connected to Islam. Secondly, the only essence attributed to Islam as a carrier civilization is a deep-seated enmity to all non-Muslims. This assumed enmity is thus a very important element in the formation of European identity, as it prescribes not only a common enemy that Europe must constantly struggle with, but also a whole morally corrupt world that it must correct or overcome.[83]

The appropriation of the material and intellectual production of non-Europeans is legitimized by denying their achievements, as a result of which the act of appropriation itself is also obliterated. A European sense of self is thus consolidated through a sort of "cultural anthropophagy" that "separates forms from their performers, converts those forms into *influences*, brings those influences to the center, leaves the living sources on the margin, and pats itself in the back for being so cosmopolitan."[84] The figure of the non-European other hence plays a decisive role not only in the development of a European identity but also in its *sanitization*, so that Europe is able to conceive itself solely in terms of its 'noblest achievements,' such as science, progress, humanism. Concomitantly, just as Europe's colonial interventions are carried out in reference to humanist ideals of 'correcting' morally corrupt traditions, the appropriation of knowledge and technology is legitimized through a discourse that "projects the West as 'mind' and theoretical refinement, and the non-West as 'body' and unrefined raw material."[85] In an oft-cited 1949 speech at the European Conference on Culture, for instance, German politician Carlo Schmid refers to this Promethean creative spirit as the most distinguishing feature of Europe: "To refuse to be just a passive and preordained element in the order of Creation is to my mind the primordial virtue that has made Europe out of a peninsula of Asia."[86]

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[83] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 169.

[84] Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentricism: Multiculturalism and the Media* (London: Routledge, 2005): 3. Emphasis added.

[85] *Ibid*., 14.

[86] Carlo Schmid, "'European is the Creative Spirit,' Speech at the European Conference on Culture, Lausanne, 1949," http://www.ellopos.net/politics/eu_schmid.html (accessed 2010, November 10).

As Anthony Pagden asserts, this discourse is recognizably a product of the Enlightenment, which is characterized by a "bid to *understand*, and through science to *control*, the external world."[87] The set of binary oppositions articulated in this Enlightenment discourse – mind/ body, theoretical production/ raw material, inventive/ imitative, rational/ irrational, order/ chaos – sustains an idea of the Western self who is entitled to define, control, and transform the world. Indeed, a prime depiction of Western modernity sees it embodied in a mobile personality who is not only eager to move, change, and invent, but is also particularly *emphatic*. Referring to this image of the free emphatic traveler, Talal Asad comments that the condition of empathy is the power to get into the life world of the other and transform it. Such power, he further demonstrates, is not exactly good or bad on its own, yet never completely disinterested either.[88] Likewise, Peter van der Veer maintains that the European "openness" to other civilizations always manifests a desire to bring development and progress. He therefore prefers to call the cosmopolitan outlook a "colonizing modernity," which upholds a moral mission and denounces its European roots in its pretense of universality.[89]

In this sense, the history of European domination should be conceived not only in terms of military conquest based on technological superiority, but perhaps even more so as the "triumph of one political system, belief, and (crucially) *one vision of the world over all others*"[90] – a triumphant Enlightenment vision which, furthermore, provides the basis of a European self-awareness. According to Göran Therborn, the development of Europeanness is directly related to the birth of modernity, in that Europe has established its sense of self specifically in being "the chief *organizer* of modernity."[91]

The fact that European domination is not merely the consequence of a superior technology – but rather of the power to define the world on its own terms – has serious implications for the efforts to contest Eurocentrism by pluralizing the

[87] Anthony Pagden, "Introduction," in *The Idea of Europe*, 11. Emphasis added.

[88] Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 11-12.

[89] Peter van der Veer, "Colonial Cosmopolitanism," in *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism*, ed. Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002): 166.

[90] Anthony Pagden, "Introduction," 10. Emphasis added.

[91] Göran Therborn, *European Modernity and Beyond* (London: Sage, 1995): 19.

sources of European civilization. On the one hand, it is true that the real frontiers between Europe and non-Europe have always been much more blurred and porous than the rhetoric of European civilizational identity would have us believe. However, as much as explaining Europe's pluralized character in terms of the recent immigration dynamics might suggest a myth of former unity, stating that "European culture developed in the context of several forms of osmosis"[92] might also assert a sense of unity through the smooth amalgamation of different cultures.

Such sense of self-awareness and unity is in fact consolidated, but emphasis should rather be placed on the fact that this process is not devoid of hegemonic power relations. European civilization is less a product of cultural exchange than one of *appropriation*. Most importantly, in its hegemonic relation to the non-European, Europe not only *manifests* but also *becomes* itself through "a certain *will* or *intention* to understand, in some cases control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternative and novel) world."[93]

In stark contrast with the European who refuses to be "a passive element," Gil Anidjar observes that in Orientalist descriptions of the Arab village, Muslims appear as "the figure of absolute subjection and of faithful resignation to violence and a death by apoplexy – a death that seems to have escaped its victims' own knowledge."[94] Anidjar maintains that this depiction of Islam as having no conscious subject, "political or other, no subject feeling for it," basically announces the secularist distinction between politics and religion.[95] In trying to articulate a history of "the Muslim" as the prime figure of absolute subjection, Anidjar talks about "an exception," an "extreme case," which he assumes that nevertheless has governed an entire discourse about Europe and its others to this very day. This is the case of *Muselmann*, a derogatory term used among the inmates of Nazi concentration camps to refer to those who, suffering from severe emaciation and starvation, give up on their humanness: "Those resigned, extinguished souls who had suffered so

[92] Jan Nederveen Pieterse, "Unpacking the West," 131.

[93] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979): 12. Emphasis in the original.

[94] Gil Anidjar, *The Jew, The Arab: A History of the Enemy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003): 119.

[95] *Ibid*., 124.

much evil as to drift to a waking death."[96] Ironically, then, Muslim was the name given for those Jews who gave up the struggle and became indifferent to their fate. As one explanation goes, the name was used because "one had the impression of looking at Arabs praying." In this sense, *Muselmänner* refers to the docile submission to one's fate structurally ascribed to Islam and the Orient,[97] and sustains the privileged figure of the European self even in the height of absolute evil and moral failure.

This is only one of the instances in which Europe figures itself facing Islam, whereby "Europe fabricates for itself a site where it will be able to protect itself from itself, protect itself from what it projects and imagines as and at its end." This primordial affinity, Anidjar contends, is constitutive of Europeanness. What is important to realize, therefore, is that Islam is historically constituted in relation to the idea of Europeanness as an "included exclusion," a "becoming-exterior" of what is inside Europe: "If the name of this exclusion, this exteriorization is 'Islam,' then in naming itself as what faces Islam, Europe hides itself from itself by claiming to have a name and a face independently of Islam."[98]

For these reasons, showing that non-European traces are abundant in European culture does not necessarily interrupt the privileged status of European modernity. The pluralization of the sources of European heritage should rather be accompanied by the critical realization that the most powerful possession of European civilization is the "Faustian power to reconstruct the world in its own image," which on its own has contributed more than any other element into bringing "Europe together as a unity."[99] Europe as a collective heritage did not simply collect non-European influences but in fact was constituted by them,[100] and most importantly, by the act of appropriation itself.

In other words, as much as Europe has a Faustian power to define the world in its own image, it also constructs its own self-image through that act. One of the major

[96] *Ibid*., 140.

[97] *Ibid*.

[98] *Ibid.,* xxii.

[99] Anthony Pagden, "Introduction," in *The Idea of Europe*, 10-11.

[100] Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentricism*, 14.

claims Edward Said puts forward in *Orientalism* holds that discourses about the Orient have been instrumental in defining a European self-image; as a matter of fact, Western appropriations of the East has much "less to do with the Orient than it does with 'our' world."[101] In this sense, Europe also invents its own collective notion of Europeanness by constructing and controlling the circulation of discourses on the Orient:

> Orientalism is never far from what Denys Hay has called the idea of Europe, a collective notion identifying 'us' Europeans as against all 'those' non-Europeans, and indeed it can be argued that the major component in European culture is precisely what made that culture hegemonic both in and outside Europe: the idea of a European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures.[102]

This image of the European self, which constructs its 'self' and acquires a sense of superiority on the basis of its power to assemble and gain knowledge of 'social reality' in its own terms, is a decisive point in answering the question, "How did Europe become European?" Interestingly enough, although directed at challenging Europe's claimed superiority and centrality, efforts to pluralize the sources of European civilization tend to overlook this crucial issue. Surely, European civilization is not a self-given uniform entity, and its historical production through contact with other cultures from which it borrowed many of its political principles, art forms, and technologies should be shown. The Europeanness of this particular civilization, however, lies not in the sum of these additions but in their transformation and cultivation. Quite obviously, then, Europe became what it is today owing to the material and cultural wealth it appropriated throughout its colonial encounters. But more importantly also, Europe has become *European* in its very will to *appropriate* as such – in the sense of acquiring, making a possession, owning as *property*; but also in making *proper*, transforming, making similar to itself.

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[101] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 12.

[102] *Ibid*., 7.

The authority to appropriate that Europe assumes, in both of its senses, is the basis of the coloniality of its modernity. In this regard, colonialism does not simply refer to an era of imperial rule that is now long past. To the contrary, as Asad particularly emphasizes, it is the "beginning of an irreversible global transformation that remains an intrinsic part of 'European experience'" per se.[103] Critique of colonialism, however, and the decolonization of history it espouses, cannot be achieved by simply dispensing with everything European. Robert Young invites us to think otherwise:

> It is not an issue of removing colonial thinking from European thought, of purging it, like today's dream of 'stamping out' racism. It is rather a question of repositioning European systems of knowledge so as to demonstrate the long history of their operation as the effect of their colonial other.[104]

To sum up and return to the starting premise, then: The idea of Europe today is still invoked in the name of a civilizational mission, and in reference to the promise of a better future. The current European experience is thus still entrenched in coloniality, so that the legacy that Europe concedes today introduces a dilemma; one that Pagden calls a 'double imposition': "The need to repudiate [the] imperial past while clinging resolutely to the belief that there can be no alternative to the essentially European liberal democratic state."[105] In any case, looking from the reverse side, the desire to "reach a hand," to help in a humanitarian spirit, and to institutionalize basic human rights has been as much an important part of the European civilizational legacy as exploitation, enslavement, and colonization.[106] European values, ideals, and principles cannot be readily dispensed with, because they are still compelling.

3.4 Prospects of Perpetual Peace: "How European is Europe?"

Half a century ago, Frantz Fanon addressed the two faces of European legacy, only to resolve to leave the European ways behind:

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[103] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 170.

[104] Robert Young, *White Mythologies*. (New York: Routledge, 2004): 158.

[105] Anthony Pagden, "Introduction," 11.

[106] *Ibid*.

> Leave… that same Europe where they were never done talking of Man, and where they never stopped proclaiming that they were only anxious for the welfare of Man: today we know with what sufferings humanity has paid for every one of their triumphs of the mind.[107]

Today, the same question persists and assumes further significance with regard to the legitimacy of the European Union. In a provocative statement, Ulrich Beck encapsulates the current dilemma of the European legacy:

> Imagine for a moment what would happen if the European Union applied for membership in the European Union. Its application would be flatly rejected. Why? Because the European Union doesn't live up to its own criteria of democracy, of Europeanness. …This paradox goes right to the heart of what's wrong with the European Union. *It isn't European enough*.[108]

Why is Europe, or the European Union, not European enough? And, concomitantly, what makes being *more* European a goal to be aspired to? Recently, there has been a strong appeal in discussing the extent to which Europe somehow fails to meet its own standards. These remarks, however, have been criticized for having become cliché Euro-skepticism, and part of the reason for failure. Indeed, as Beck and Grande maintain, "that Europe is trapped in a malaise is by now a truism," and Europe cannot yet be discarded as an obsolete idea. Quite to the contrary, they aver, "today Europe is the last really effective utopia,"[109] and this "realistic utopia," as Rawls puts it, is grounded in the cosmopolitan outlook.

Europe cannot but cling to the idea of Europe, then, because the values inscribed in the idea, such as democracy and cosmopolitanism, are indispensible for a more just social order promised in the future *to come*. This constitutes the second major dilemma of European identity, encapsulated in the question: "How European is

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[107] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 251.

[108] Ulrich Beck, "Understanding the Real Europe," *Dissent Magazine*, 2003 Summer, http://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/?article=483 (accessed 2010, 01-November). Emphasis added.

[109] Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande, *Cosmopolitan Europe*, trans. Ciaran Cronin. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007): 2.

Europe?" As an attempt to measure to what extent 'Europe, today' is – in an important sense – *worthy of its name*, this question addresses the level of solidarity in the continent, its diversity and traumatic history, so as to redeem the past and save the future by recycling its core values. Most importantly, the question is posed to 'Europe, today' in relation to an ideal of Europe, in order to assess how democracy and cosmopolitanism, despite their Eurocentric and universalizing formations, are indispensible values; and the extent to which Europe adheres to these notions within its current place in the globalized world, and in its current experience with unification, postcoloniality, migration, and Islam.

In recent years, cosmopolitanism has become a widespread intellectual and political commitment, by way of offering middle-path alternatives between ethnocentric nationalism and particularistic multiculturalism. Although the cosmopolitan outlook is a radically incomplete research project and encompasses immensely diverse viewpoints,[110] several commitments mark it as an identifiable movement: A sustained critique of methodological nationalism; the diagnosis of the present as an age of cosmopolitanism; and most typically, "a shared normative-philosophical commitment to the primacy of world citizenship over all national, religious, cultural, ethnic and other parochial affiliations."[111]

The debate on cosmopolitanism in Europe is particularly intense, especially on the issue of democratic legitimacy. The leading German intellectual Jürgen Habermas, one of the most fervent advocates of Europeanization, sees the European Union as the hallmark of cosmopolitan values and a new kind of transnational polity that gains legitimacy by replicating the democratic institutions of the nation-state.[112] According to Will Kymlicka and many others, however, transnational institutions exhibit a "major democratic deficient" as they have little appeal for citizens and the public in general.[113] Indeed, one of the major problems for the European Union is

[110] Craig Calhoun, "The Class Consciousness of Frequent Travellers: Toward a Critique of Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism," in *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism*, ed. Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, 86-209 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[111] Ulrich Beck and Natan Sznaider, "Unpacking Cosmopolitanism for the Social Sciences: A Research Agenda," *The British Journal of Sociology* 57, no. 1 (2006): 6.

[112] Jürgen Habermas. *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*. (Cambridge: Polity, 2001)

[113] Will Kymlicka. *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)

that it lacks an identifiable body of citizens, a European *demos* – if not *ethnos* – united by a shared vision, a European *ethos*. The concretization of a "European citizenship" is indeed essential, as it promises a way of articulating social and political rights on a supra-national body, as well as making the very institution of citizenship open to the "diverse components of the 'European people' in some basis other than the simple inheritance of nationality."[114] This process is fraught with difficulties, however. Supra-national institutions cannot be recognized as legitimate if they do not provide for the individuals they bring together an "at least equal (and in fact greater) level of security and degree of democratic participation" than that already available in the nation-state. Meanwhile, as Etienne Balibar asserts in a major argument, the failure to establish a common framework of citizenship based on *jus soli* or residence throughout Europe will result in a legal apartheid:

> The addition of the exclusions proper to each of the national citizenships united in the European Union will inevitably produce an explosive effect of apartheid, in flagrant contradiction with the ambition of constituting a democratic model on the continental and world scale.[115]

In this sense, the EU's future demise depends upon the growth of some level of attachment to itself as a new political project. As Pagden also notes, however, people do not readily surrender their national commitments for something that is "neither better nor worse." What is necessary, therefore, is to generate a "vision of a political and social order that is more just… and more compelling than the order currently prevailing in any of the independent nation-states."[116]

This points to the time-honored idea of perpetual peace, on which the spirit of cosmopolitan Europeanness is based. This idea is perhaps as old as the history of antagonisms in the continent itself and is not limited to Immanuel Kant's well-known "To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch" published in 1795. Among his predecessors are Saint-Simon and Thierry, who inspired whole generation of

[114] Etienne Balibar, *We, the People of Europe?*, 43.

[115] *Ibid*.

[116] Anthony Pagden, "Europe: Conceptualizing a Continent," 20.

supporters throughout early 1800's. These ideas of perpetual peace had already inspired numerous peace congresses with the agenda of reordering Europe after the downfall of Napoleon, the most popular of which is the Congress of Vienna, before becoming an indispensible framework for the postwar European integration.[117]

In a co-signed plea which opened up a ferocious debate,[118] Habermas and Derrida summon the rejuvenation of the idea of cosmopolitan Europe, the "core Europe," which can be summarized as: a source of solidarity that can recover the virtues of the social welfare state; a locus of human rights and resentment over the violation of human rights; the political arena of an international community; a political culture that supersedes all particularistic forms of identity, including primordial appeals to a Christian Europe. In this perspective, Europe is an imaginary community inscribed in a transnational polity that is able to "promote a cosmopolitan order on the basis of international law against competing visions." [119]

There is therefore a major emphasis on the idea of Europe in the colossal topic of cosmopolitanism. This emphasis states that a cosmopolitan Europe will be more European, and promises to become the hallmark of the institutionalization of cosmopolitan values. Although the European legacy in this context signifies a culture that has been characterized more by conflict than by unity, it is one that "had to painfully learn how differences can be communicated, contradictions institutionalized, and tensions stabilized."[120] What is meant by a more European Europe, therefore, is one that is able to contain and suppress the antagonisms that caused the horrors of the past, hence a Europe that can better guarantee peace:

> This initial and prime objective of "Europe" as a political conception is to ensure peace…, to suppress the horrors of two world wars,

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[117] Heikki Mikkeli, *Europe as an Idea and Identity*, 72.

[118] Levy, Daniel, Max Pensky, and John Torpe (eds). *Old Europe, New Europe, Core Europe: Transatlantic Relations After the Iraq War.* London: Verso, 2005.

[119] Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida, "February 15, or What Binds Europeans Together: A Plea for a Common Foreign Policy, Beginning in the Core of Europe," *Constellations* 10, no. 3 (2003): 294. In the text, only Habermas is cited as the author because he actually wrote this article individually and because the article does not reflect the specificity of Derrida's thinking, who agreed to co-sign afterwards due to certain circumstances.

[120] *Ibid*.

> initiated by Europeans and fought between European states and their overseas dependencies… The concern to create a Europe that would no longer be prey to internal conflict has been the foundation of many postwar foreign policy objectives.[121]

So, the legacy that Europe inherits inscribes to contradictory experiences: On the one hand, a bellicose past of bloody conflicts based on national, ethnic and religious differences that culminated in the insuppressible memory of the Holocaust. On the other hand, the self-critical perspective about this past, which "reminds us of the moral basis of politics,"[122] and is better equipped to remedy these antagonisms to ensure a better future. The dilemma that this twofold legacy inscribes is best captured by Edmund Husserl in his 1935 Vienna lecture, where he pleaded that Europe was facing, at the time, an irreversible choice in which the descent into "barbarianism" could still be prevented by reason. According to Husserl, the obvious option was the return to the Europe's philosophical pillars, which had to be perpetuated with constant self-criticism and renewal: a "rebirth of Europe from the spirit of philosophy."[123]

In retrospect, however, Husserl's investment in the spirit of philosophy seems to have been unable to save Europe from two world wars and the Holocaust, after which it seems rather absurd to claim that Europe has a higher degree of civilization and that humanitarianism, inscribed with the touch of Christianity, is part of that civilization's mission. However, echoing Husserl's conviction that "Europe's greatest danger is weariness," Habermas still summons to "distinguish between the legacy we appropriate and the one we want to refuse" in what Husserl calls the spirit of a "good European":

> Historical experiences are only candidates for self-conscious appropriation; without such a self-conscious act they cannot attain the power to shape our identity."[124]

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[121] Anthony Pagden, "Introduction," 7.

[122] Habermas and Derrida, "What Binds Europeans Together," 294.

[123] Edmund Husserl's 1935 Vienna lecture "Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man," is available online at http://www.users.cloud9.net/~bradmcc/husserl_philcris.html

[124] Habermas and Derrida, "What Binds Europeans Together," 295.

In the circumspection of its past, the most remarkable of European experience, according to Habermas, is not only the empire, but more importantly the experience of its loss. This defeated stance, according to Habermas, gives a certain perspective from which the European powers must resist Eurocentrism and assume the responsibility to account for the violent history of modernization-*cum*-Europeanization. Imbued with this responsibility, the European project cannot but be inspired by the hope for a cosmopolitan Europe.[125] Overall, therefore, we can see Europeanization as a sort of social experiment, the success of which is seen to be essentially dependent on the inscription of a Europe that is more European by replacing the older alignment of its peoples, and by cherishing the ideal of perpetual peace through a cosmopolitan vision.

3.5 (Un-)Inheriting the Legacy: Europe as an Example

There is an inescapable gravity to Habermas' intuitive statement quoted above, which asserts that although Europe has had unfortunate historical experiences, they do not automatically define what Europe is today, unless Europeans want them to. On the one hand, there is immense and immediate political importance on defining what Europe is and is not. On the other hand, this new political culture must necessarily be conceptualized by rethinking Europe's history in a critical manner. The self-reflexive rethinking of the European past has already been instigated by the challenges posed by postcolonial interventions, which aim to displace the norms of Western knowledge. This, however, does not mean a wholesale rejection or the mere addition of non-European influences, but a more radical project of what Raymond Williams has called the "unlearning" of the "inherent dominative mode."[126]

The unlearning process is not as easy as it seems. As discussed above, given the intricate relationship between colonialism, racism, and the European civilizational narrative, positing a "unity in diversity" in Europe necessitates an erasure of its colonial past on the one hand, and its own history of antagonisms and traumatic experiences on the other. This is further related to the fact that Europe as a project,

[125] *Ibid*., 297.

[126] Quoted in Said, *Orientalism*, 28.

to be accepted as such, must provide a "better alternative" to the present order. In this sense, the most remarkable feature of the current discourses on Europe is the effort to invent a new "exemplary" identity that is "good and noble," while "awakening history to its proper end" in order to pretend that it has been thus all along. As Hayden White contends,

> The current quest for Europe's true 'identity' is the manifestation in public discourse of an effort to invent a new identity for Europe but in such a way as to mask the sleight of hand involved in pretending that Europe has been… good and noble all along the course of its history.[127]

The effort to define a Europe that is "worthy to provide the ethos of a new kind of community" is motivated by the desire to absolve and redeem the unworthy Europe, which has been "responsible for the new forms of social violence spawned in the 'rotten twentieth century.'"[128] Employing a Barthesian analysis, White arrives at the conclusion that in the contemporary discourses about Europe, what remains unmarked or is taken for granted as an intrinsic element of European identity is "the barbarism on the basis of which Europe's civilization has been purchased."[129] The new ethos of Europeanness must necessarily and explicitly address this responsibility, which refers not only to violence of wars and conquests but also the European power to overcome difference through "geopolitical and conceptual incorporation of Others in an imagined world order based on European civilization."[130] Consequently, in contemporary discourses, Europe appears as "the proper name of history itself," or "the teleological movement of Europe-as-reason-as-history,"[131] with the effect of repudiating responsibility for its past. As Jacques Derrida maintains,

> Europe has the privilege of being *the good example*, for it incarnates in its purity the Telos of all historicity… By investigating the sense of

[127] Hayden White, "The Discourse of Europe and the Search for a European Identity," 67.

[128] *Ibid*.

[129] *Ibid*., 84.

[130] Bo Strath, "Multiple Europes," 406.

[131] Marc Redfield, "Derrida, Europe, Today," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 106, no. 2 (2007): 380-381.

> pure and infinite possibility of historicity, Europe has awakened history to its proper end.[132]

Paradoxically, then, Habermas' notion of appropriating what remains good from the idea of Europe translates into a project of taking history mainly as a legitimation of the European integration, especially in popular discourses. Nico Wilterdink particularly emphasizes this legitimizing function of the selective appropriation of history:

> On the one hand it is explicitly stated that there is a fundamental unity and that this unity is still insufficiently 'realized.' So a discrepancy between essence and manifestation, between the essential unity and the empirical reality of the moment is assumed, and this implies a summons to achieve, and justifies the pursuit of, further unity.[133]

Not unlike Wilterdink, Delanty further explicates on Europe's "inherent dominative mode" by referring to the Gramscian concept of hegemony. He asserts that Europe today has become part of a hegemonical cultural discourse, in which the idea of Europe itself has been elevated to the status of an induced consensus. Improvable yet indispensible, the idea of Europe creates a social universe in which Europe constructs itself as a self-enclosure that cannot be easily chosen or rejected, "for it itself structures the field of choices and the epistemological framework in which it is articulated." Furthermore, as a "meta-norm of legitimation for the pursuit of a strategy of power," the self-image of Europe is never monolithic but always torn with contradictions. What is important, however, is that due to such inherent tensions, the idea of Europe also "collapses at the point of becoming hegemonic."[134] In other words, Europe cannot successfully assert itself as a totalizing discourse without also erasing its own name and disinheriting its legacy.

Whereas Europe signifies a hegemonical cultural discourse for Delanty, Derrida sees it as the prime example of the logic of exemplarity. In *The Other Heading*,

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[132] Jacques Derrida, quoted in Michael Naas, "Introduction: For Example," in *The Other Heading*, xvii.

[133] Nico Wilterdink, "The European Ideal," 122.

[134] Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe*, 6-7.

Derrida argues that discourses about Europe's identity, distinction, and its new role in the world cannot but affirm Europe's role as an example of universality: "Each time, it is a discourse of an exemplary discourse for the logic of the example, and exemplary European discourse of universality."[135] Consequently, in what Pagden diagnoses as the 'triumph of one vision over all others,' Derrida sees the logic of exemplarity at work; that is, the "value of universality [as] always linked to the universal in the proper body of a singularity."[136]

Derrida refers to the problems pointed out by Wilterdink and Delanty as an *aporia*: "How does one assume a responsibility that announces itself as contradictory because it inscribes us from the very beginning of the game into a kind of necessarily double obligation, a *double bind*?"[137] In other words, that Europe retains its exemplarity suggests that even when we try to envision something radically new, the name Europe and the double bind of its legacy remain inescapable. Even for Derrida himself, Enlightenment values are indispensible and working within and from them is necessary, although it is also necessary to always remember that these values are never enough to "ensure respect for the other."[138] As Michael Naas explains by referring to Derrida's maritime metaphor, the new Europe – or, for that matter, the *more European* Europe – must "hold fast to its inheritance in the Enlightenment in order to set sail for a radically 'other heading.'"[139]

In *Rogues*, Derrida discusses the Enlightenment value of democracy as a sovereign authority that necessarily appears as circular, always returning to itself, in the form of an "identity between the origin and the conclusion,… the driving cause and the final cause."[140] This implies that efforts to improve democracy – or other cultural values – must necessarily retain its name. Derrida calls this quality of self-sovereignty the *ipseity* of the name. According to the logic of *ipseity*, the name cannot differ without retaining itself. In the context of Europe, then, Europe must be

[135] Michael Naas, "Introduction: For Example," in *The Other Heading*, xxxix.

[136] Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading*, 71.

[137] *Ibid*., 29. Emphasis in the original.

[138] Michael Naas, "Introduction: For Example," in *The Other Heading*, xlvi.

[139] Michael Naas, *Derrida From Now On*, 82.

[140] Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. Pascalle-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005): 13.

improved *in the name of* Europe, in order to envision a Europe *worthy of its name*. The double bind comes from the fact that this name also always already differs from itself, or in other words, because "what is proper to a culture is not to be identical to itself."[141] To be more European, therefore, is not a program of self-identification. To the contrary, it should point to the (im)possibility of retaining the name "European" while also differing from itself. As Derrida emphasizes in a notable passage,

> I am European, I am no doubt a European intellectual, and I like to recall this, I like to recall this to myself, and why would I deny it? In the name of what?… I do not want to be and must not be European *in every part*… My cultural identity, that in the name of which I speak, is not only European, it is not identical to itself…[142]

If Europe remains inescapable, this is not only because it offers an inheritance worth choosing, but also because choosing it is a responsibility toward memory. The notion of responsibility, furthermore, is closely related to that of heritage, but it is not a simple option between the good legacy to appropriate and the bad one to refuse, as Habermas expresses it. The essential gesture is to acknowledge the responsibility for the memory of Europe, which is possible by transforming it to the point of reinventing it.[143] In this sense, memories of Europe do not articulate a choice between good and bad legacies, but requires a double affirmation of choice and responsibility. Meanwhile, it is important to remember that for Derrida, inheritance is almost directly related to responsibility, and always only paradoxically implies choice. A legacy is, by definition, something that one does not choose but is endowed with. Consequently, the first obligation toward this legacy is to respond and choose to affirm it as inheritance:

> Far from the comfort that we rather too quickly associate with this word, the heir must always respond to a sort of double injunction, a contradictory assignation: It is necessary first of all to know and to know how to reaffirm what comes "before us," which we therefore

[141] Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading*, 9.

[142] *Ibid*., 82-83. Emphasis in the original.

[143] Giovanna Borradori, Jacques Derrida and Jürgen Habermas, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003): 171.

> receive even before choosing, and to behave in this respect as a free subject… Not choosing (since what characterizes a heritage is first of all that one does not choose it; it is what violently elects us). But choosing to keep it alive… Even at the moment – and this is the other side of the double injunction – when this very heritage, in order to save its life… demands reinterpretation, critique, displacement, that is, an active intervention, so that a transformation worthy of the name might take place…"[144]

As Rudolphe Gasche explains, then, the experience of inheritance, without which one could not have responsibility, is thus recognizably an *aporetic* experience. Furthermore, since the concept of responsibility is inherently tied to the concept of the decision, the heir can show fidelity to the heritage only by intervening in what is received: "This is being responsible for the heritage in our own name and thus to re-launch this heritage itself in a singular and novel fashion."[145] It is, in a certain sense, in one's own name that one breaks with the heritage. After all, as Derrida points out, memory is not only about preserving and conserving the past, it is always already turned toward the future, "toward the promise, toward what is coming, what is arriving, what is happening tomorrow.'"[146] This is the experience of an *aporia*, in the promise of Europe *to-come*. This explicitly contradicts Habermas. The decision cannot be a conscious act; to the contrary, because choice predates the subject, it is necessarily an act of faith. Derrida demonstrates this aptly in response to Giovanna Borradori's question about the importance of the role of Europe, when he answers, "I hope for it, but I do not see it":

> I have not seen anything in the facts that would give rise to any certainty or knowledge… If there are responsibilities to be taken and decisions to be made, responsibilities and decisions worthy of these names, they belong to the time of a risk and of an act of faith.[147]

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[144] Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco, *For What Tomorrow... A Dialogue*, trans. Jeff Fort (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004): 3. Emphasis in the original.

[145] Rodolphe Gasche, "Europe, or the Inheritance of Responsibility," *Cardozo Law Review* 27, no. 2 (2005): 589.

[146] Borradori, Derrida, and Habermas, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror,* 172.

[147] *Ibid*., 118.

CHAPTER 4

EUROPEAN ISLAM AND THE SECULARIST NARRATIVE

On the whole, neither radical Islam
nor liberal Islam appears to make people rethink
Western conceptions of secular modernity.[148]

When current discussions about finding a permanent place for Muslims in Europe are put into the particular context of finding a proper name for Europe itself, the prospects of establishing a "European Islam" can be evaluated from a more critical perspective. This chapter will focus on the efforts towards the articulation of Islam as a "religion among religions" Europe, which has been prompted by the rather recent realization that Muslims are no longer immigrants who will one day return to their countries of origin.

From a general point of view, there are two prominent figures in the contemporary debates about Islam in Europe today. The first is the Muslim figure: the former immigrant who has long abandoned dreams of returning to homeland and who now desires to "feel at home" in Europe. Being born and educated in Europe and literate in its political idioms, this second and third-generation of immigrants seek to make their difference visible not only in terms of political representation but also in the everyday spaces of public life. Through various performative practices such as veiling at work and schools, setting markets for halal food, and constructing mosques, they make their presence visible in Europe. This visibility challenges the

[148] Talal Asad, interview in Nermeen Shaikh, *The Present as History*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008): 212.

boundaries between public-private, secular-religious and cultural-political domains, and Muslims find themselves constantly negotiating basic European values as they try to "carve a place for themselves within the European intellectual and social spheres."[149]

The second figure is the European who seeks to find the cultural basis of its own identity on the one hand, and the political legitimacy of its supranational union on the other. As the host to the group of Muslim immigrants, it reads these ostensible signs of Islamic presence in the public space as a "return of the religious" that threatens to erode Enlightenment values and the European ways of life. As the Muslim guest extends its stay and seeks to find a permanent place, and fears of Islamic fundamentalism and global terrorism lead to tighter security and surveillance measures, the European host's limits of tolerance and hospitality are put to test.

In this environment, we can make out three general standpoints as to the demise of these two figures that desperately try to coexist. The extreme standpoint holds that Europe and Islam belong to utterly different geographies, histories and sensibilities, and are therefore completely incompatible. Taking culture as a static and archaic artifact, proponents of this view argue that Islam has to be "modernized" if it is to remain – yet never fully belong – in Europe. This is the drive behind calls for anti-immigration policies characterized by a fear of "Islamization of Europe."

The more moderate standpoint still retains a static view on culture and identity, only to argue that Islam is a tolerant, peaceful and historically adaptive religion "in its essence." Proponents of this view are eager to show the ways in which Muslim immigrants have "evolved" throughout their contact with Europe in order to prove that Islam and the West are compatible. This often leads to state-sponsored efforts to intensify inter-faith dialogue, institutionalize a homegrown liberal Islam by creating a national representative body, and thus "Europeanize Islam." Explicitly emphasizing the importance of openness and dialogue, the idea of "Euro-Islam" is a

[149] Tariq Ramadan, "Islam and Muslims in Europe: A Silent Revolution Toward Rediscovery," in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, ed. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002):159.

cosmopolitan exaltation of breaking down frontiers and constantly opening up new public spaces for a more democratic and permanent place for Islam in Europe.

By juxtaposing the prospects of "Europeanizing Islam" with the deep-seated fear of the "Islamization of Europe," the main argument in this chapter will hold that the current discussions about finding a permanent and proper place for Islam in Europe are guided by two concerns: First, at the more immediate level and for security reasons, the Europeanization of Islam through dialogue with moderate elements is deemed necessary in order to prevent the radicalization of Muslims in Europe. Secondly, these efforts should be seen as another instance of the civilizational mission that Europe assumes, which emerges as a desire that the other recognizes the name Europe has chosen for itself. This name may be constructed in primordial or constructivist or dialogic terms. In both cases, however, the issue is not so much a matter of how to make this name more inclusive, but how to appropriate the excluded and make them recognize the proper name.

4.1 Islamization of Europe: Radical Fears and Cultural Racism

As discussed in the second chapter, in contemporary Europe, migration has become a key theme through which various concerns relating to cultural identity, citizenship, security, welfare and gender are articulated and expressed. Culturalization of migrants and essentialization of Islam in its inadaptability to secular European values have found resonance in Europe particularly in the aftermath of September 11, when the generation of a widespread public panic has come to underline not only a malaise in integration policies but also a crisis of security in the advent of transnational fundamentalism and terrorism. There is thus a feeling that Islam's cultural and religious symbols are politicized – either inherently or by design – as expressions of hostility towards the Western world, which leads to an aggrandizement of general paranoia about the Islamic conquest of European societies by its migrants. According to a widespread line of argument, in Europe's contemporary experience with migration, Islam has been exceptional in its unwillingness or inability to integrate into their host cultures. The problem, as the argument goes, is not so much a matter of the right to express religiosity in general, but the ambiguous and suspect manner in which such expressions are made by

Islam in particular. The image of the inassimilable Muslim therefore emerges as a threat to the social fabric of European societies. As Jose Casanova emphasizes,

> As liberal democratic systems, all European societies respect the private exercise of religion, including Islam, as an individual human right. It is the public and collective free exercise of Islam as an immigrant religion that most European societies find difficult to tolerate precisely on the grounds that Islam is perceived as an essentially 'un-European' religion.[150]

What are the implications of denying a cultural affinity between Europe and Islam? These "Trojan horse" discourses are based on a depiction of Islam as a religious ideology that pervades all spheres of its adherents' social life. This assumption thus leads to the peculiar portrayal of Islam as a "religion of conquest," and the conviction that such a thing as a "moderate Islam" can only be an oxymoron, since Islam as a civilization is inherently bent on destroying and conquering the non-Muslim Western world. It should therefore not come as a surprise that the most fervent discussions of identity in Europe coincide with periods of social and economic crisis. Simply because it is *there* as a perceived threat, all kinds of socioeconomic problems can easily be connected to immigration and the figure of the Muslim immigrant who stands opposed to, and threatens to erode or conquer, everything "European."

In recent years, scholars have begun to identify a new style of racism in the populist rhetoric against immigration. Adopted by most extreme rightist groups across Europe, this peculiar kind of racism operates on terms of cultural identity and difference. In this sense, it is distinct from the racist rhetoric of the earlier eras: Instead of positing a hierarchy of human species like biological racism, the culturalist rhetoric operates as racism by conceiving culture as a static set of traditions and archaic values, which are historically bounded and geographically rooted in predefined groups. This new tendency necessitates a reformulation of the categories of race and racism as well. In his review of racism in migration studies,

[150] Jose Casanova, "Religion, European Secular Identities, and European Integration," in *Religion in an Expanding Europe*, ed. Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter J. Katzenstein, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 78.

Paul Silverstein starts with a definition of race as a "cultural category of difference that is contextually constructed as essential and natural – as residing within the very body of the individual."[151] Racialization, accordingly, refers to the processes through which "any diacritic of social personhood—including class, ethnicity, generation, kinship/affinity, and positions within fields of power—comes to be essentialized, naturalized, and/or biologized."[152] Silverstein thus detects a general discursive shift in racist paradigms from an emphasis on purely biological foundations towards an emergence of racial categories that presuppose "cultural difference as the fundamental and immutable basis of identity and belonging."[153]

Pierre-Andre Taguieff has termed this doctrine of exclusion as "differential racism,"[154] which sustains irreducible essentialized differences between the European and its immigrant counterpart. It is therefore able to explain Muslim immigrants' inability to integrate without referring to any external socioeconomic forces, and condemn the threat they pose to the host society's authentic national identity. This in turn feeds latent fears of cultural conquest, which appears as the contamination of a superior "way of life" rather than that of blood or race. In sum, the new rhetoric of exclusion operates not so much by making the different explicitly and directly inferior, but by positing the incommensurability and the inherent hostility of different cultural identities.

Meanwhile, Verena Stolcke chooses to identify the contemporary construction of exclusion as "cultural fundamentalism." Like Taguieff and others, she asserts that as a peculiar form of xenophobia, cultural fundamentalism legitimates the exclusion of foreigners based on the basic assumption that "relations between different cultures are by nature hostile and mutually destructive because it is in human nature to be ethnocentric." Cultural fundamentalist arguments go on to assert that different cultures should therefore be prevented from mingling "for their own good" and for

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[151] Paul A. Silverstein, "Immigrant Racialization and the New Savage Slot: Race, Migration, and Immigration in the New Europe," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 2005: 364.

[152] *Ibid*.

[153] *Ibid*., 365.

[154] Pierre-Andre Taguieff, *The Force of Prejudice: On Racism and Its Doubles*, trans. Hassan Melehy (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).

the sake of preserving diversity.[155] What is different in Stolcke's account is her emphasis on "fundamentalism." Whereas fundamentalism usually conjures up images of traditionalist religious forces that react against modernization, the ways in which "the contemporary secular cultural fundamentalism of the right" exalts primordial identities is not regarded as a pre-modern phenomenon. Stolcke is intent on drawing attention to this inconsistency in the use of the term, as she suggests that the assumptions on which they are based exemplify "a contradictory part of modernity" itself.[156]

Meanwhile, it is crucial to note that the positioning of Islam as an essentially "un-European" civilizational identity functions to secure a morally higher ground for the idea of Europe. In as much as Islam is depicted as a totalitarian and violent ideology with secret malevolent schemes, Europe is able to consolidate itself as the "good and noble" one whose good intentions are being usurped. In other words, as Islam becomes more visible and Muslim actors become more vocal in the public realm, their mere existence is perceived to be a direct threat to the erosion of "European ways of life," which are apparently not only different but better.

This enables even the most radical of rightist groups to promote themselves as defenders of modern liberal values and European democracy against the Islamic threat. More often than not, public discussions and media spectacles about the Islamic threat commence with the issuing of wake-up calls by prominent intellectuals, who claim that liberal politicians have lost their sense of reality in trying to be tolerant towards a Muslim population that manipulates Europe's benevolence. What need to be questioned at this point, therefore, are the conditions that enable speaking of Muslims on debasing and pejorative terms, which is utterly at odds with European ideals, and still be taken seriously. Drawing attention to the importance of wake-up calls, Leeuw and Wichelen observe the emergence of a new discourse of decency appealing to the principal of free speech in the new political environment:

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[155] Verena Stolcke, "Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New Rhetorics of Exclusion in Europe," *Current Anthropology* 36, no. 1 (1995): 5.

[156] *Ibid*., 4.

> The combination of 'Enlightenment fundamentalism' and 'commitment kitsch,' in the conservative appeal to decency and moral values by the liberal-right, has established a new realm of political correctness. In contrast to the political correctness of the political left, which was inspired by multiculturalism, identity politics, and anti-racist politics, this redefinition claims its legitimating force by 'openly saying what's on one's mind' without having to be fearful of being politically incorrect.[157]

Within this new regime of political correctness, ordinary people are able to demonstrate their sense of responsibility as rational citizens through intervention in a crudely blunt style, and by claiming to expose the disillusioned naïveté involved in politics of tolerance towards the Muslim population. This regime creates "a space for people to vent their fear and anxiety of the cultural other in a public domain that would now not accuse them of racism or xenophobia."[158]

There are two critical points to consider at this point, however. Most importantly, the appeals to freedom of speech for the legitimization of blunt and limitless criticism of Muslims need to be questioned. This is because, as Asad also underlines, it is liberalism itself as a discursive space that "provides its advocates with a common political and moral language in which to identify problems and to dispute them."[159] Speaking from a morally superior position, the European subject's rational defense of political freedom is a confirmation of its "limitless self by making a distinction between good and bad violence, with a desire that is impossible."[160]

An important dimension of the new discourses of racism in Europe is that, by employing not biological but culturalized terms, they are able to operate precisely through a denial of their racist implication. To this point, Goldberg coins the term

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[157] Marc de Leeuw and Sonja van Wichelen, "'Please, Go Wake Up'," *Feminist Media Studies* 5, no. 3 (2005): 334.

[158] *Ibid*.

[159] Talal Asad, "Free Speech, Blasphemy, and Secular Criticism," in *Is Critique Secular? Blasphemy, Injury, and Free Speech*, 20-62 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009): 25.

[160] *Ibid*., 56.

"racial Europeanization" in order to emphasize the legacy of Europeanization as a civilizational identity, and remind us that although "the contemporary euro-panics around 'the Muslim'" are induced by new conditions, they nevertheless have very deep roots.[161] Most importantly, Goldberg suggests, the limiting the problem of racism to the Jewish question implicates a desire to erase the remnants and memories of Holocaust, the "defining event, the mark par excellence of race and racially inscribed histories," although this desire can never be fulfilled. As a result, racist implications remain "lingering and diffuse, silent but assumed,"[162] in the particular form of culturalist discourses against immigration.

The denial of racism inherent in European history is made in response to a specific ethical question: "How could we do it to those who are like us, who are among us?" A corollary of this denial is to legitimize violence abroad: "Having sought to annihilate difference among us, how much easier to do it to those already at a distance, to those more readily neither among us nor acceptably part of us."[163] Like Goldberg, Asad also discusses Europe's sense of "moral failure," and asserts that memories of violence within Europe are "are particularly shameful because Europeans try to cover up their past cruelties in Europe to *other Europeans* instead of confronting that fact fully."[164] The ironic implication is that collective memories of violence and the painful memories of the Holocaust do not disturb the myth of Europe, which is in fact strengthened by their recollection.

Overall, racial Europeanization is made possible through a civilizational discourse of "Europeanness" that differentiates between "us" and "them," and operates as a desire to erase its own marks and effects. At this point, it is necessary to refer to Silverstein again, who maintains that immigrants are racialized not only along culturalized terms of difference but also in terms of their presumed intimate relationship to mobility. This "racialized slot" that links race with mobility is occupied by "perpetually rootless, cosmopolitan, and displaced (or displaceable) groups," whose history of movement challenges the alleged unity and fixity of the

[161] David Theo Goldberg, "Racial Europeanization," 363.

[162] *Ibid*., 334.

[163] *Ibid*., 336.

[164] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 162.

nation-state. In the post 9/11 environment, Silverstein affirms, the racialized category of Muslim appears as the prime figure against national narratives and prospects of continental unification in Europe:

> …The latest icon of such fears of permanent immigrant mobility, of preternatural Islamic transnationalism, has become the young European Muslim man, recruited to travel abroad in the duties of global *jihad*... Suspect (like Jews and Gypsies before them) as "witches," as potential enemies within, with states and scholars speculating on the orientation of their ultimate loyalties, whether toward European host polities or toward particular Muslim homelands (or a more general *Dar al-Islam*) geographically and imaginatively located elsewhere.[165]

The political mobilization against the Islamization of Europe today thus endorses a deep suspicion of Muslim immigrants' political loyalties. As Peter van der Veer puts it, "Muslims today are either accused of being loyal to Mecca... or their nation-states of origin."[166] Under this pressure, Muslims are expected to constantly demonstrate their allegiance to European values, and the laws of their host societies, in which sense they are perhaps expected to become more European than Europeans.[167] The reason for the anxiety with the transnational Muslim migrant is thus twofold: There is, from the start, a secularist discomfort with the extent of the public role of religion in Islam, as it is perceived to clash with the principles of liberty and disturb established boundary between religious and political domains in the public sphere. Moreover, the particular binding role of religion in transnational ties is also a source of mistrust. Van der Veer emphasizes that countries of origin have economic and political interests in maintaining ties with the transnational communities. Religion emerges as a key element in the maintenance of loyalties across borders. Since "it is religion that ties these migrants to the nation," states

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[165] Paul A. Silverstein, "Immigrant Racialization and the New Savage Slot," 366.

[166] Peter van der Veer, "Transnational Religion," in *Conference on Transnational Migration: Comparative Perspectives* (Princeton University, 2001).

[167] Jörgen Nielsen, "The Question of Euro-Islam: Restriction or Opportunity," in *Islam in Europe: Diversity, Identity and Influence*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 37.

control their linkages to the transnational community through various policies such as the appointment of religious officials.[168]

The transnational binds are especially disconcerting when they are seen to decouple religion from a sense of cultural belonging that could secure political loyalty. The problem lies in the fact that what has been identified as the contemporary "religious revival" across the globe in fact develops by detaching religious essentials away from cultural references. Islam, in this sense, does not refer to a pre-modern traditional remnant in post-secular and post-modern times, but the reinterpretation of a religious doctrine that is universalized beyond the scope of specific cultures. Ironically, as Olivier Roy has observed, this loss of cultural identity may be the condition for both the integration of migrants in their new environments and for the growth of fundamentalist and regressive forces.[169] The European anxiety about born-again Muslims with transnational ties refers to this imminent threat of fundamentalism thriving on the loss of cultural referents: In a certain sense, the young Muslim radicals are indeed perfectly modern and Westernized.

4.2 Europeanization of Islam: Secular Hopes and Security Concerns

In the modernist worldview, Zygmunt Bauman proclaims, "There are friends and enemies. And there are *strangers*."[170] In the contemporary European experience with Muslim immigrants, we can say that Europe's friends are the immigrants who have fully assimilated into their host environments and given up their "Muslim outlook" along with their cultural baggage. Concurrently, its enemies are "political Islam" and global terrorism. But who are the *strangers*?

According to Bauman, the basic premise of the modernist attitude is its ceaseless drive to build order, impose structure on chaos, and create homogeneity out of disordered heterogeneity. In both its liberal and illiberal versions, this worldview espouses to eliminate unfitting elements. The most threatening of these misfits is the figure of "the stranger," as it disturbs the modernist project of order building by

[168] Peter van der Veer, "Transnational Religion."

[169] Olivier Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

[170] Zygmunt Bauman, "Modernity and Ambivalence," *Theory, Culture & Society* 7 (1990): 143.

resisting definition and concealing boundaries. Due to its disturbing ambivalence, the figure of the stranger has largely been regarded as "an anomaly to be rectified" and its presence thus deemed as always temporary. There are two strategies through which modernist narrative has dealt with the question of the stranger: The liberal project is one of assimilation, which espouses the necessity of "making the different similar." The second is a strategy of exclusion, either social exclusion, physical segregation, or even deportation and physical annihilation. Both strategies assume the eventual disappearance of difference so that, in Bauman's words, the strangers exist only "in a state of suspended extinction."[171]

Bauman notes, however, that there is now a realization of the fact that making strangers disappear through assimilation has largely proved unfeasible, and annihilation is obviously no longer a legitimate option. Instead, the presence of strangers is now regarded as permanent and pervasive, an inherent characteristic of the postmodern disorder:

> The essential difference between the socially-produced modality of modern and postmodern strangers is that while modern strangers were earmarked for annihilation…, the postmodern ones are by common consent or resignation, whether joyful or grudging, here to stay… *The question is no longer how to get rid of the strangers and the strange, but how to live with them, daily and permanently*.[172]

In this sense, any sensible strategy of coping with the unpredictable and the ambivalent should be based on the recognition of this fact – which is, in the context of our discussion, that Islam has become a permanent part of Europe. To return to the initial question, then: The role of the stranger in Europe today is allocated to those Muslim immigrants who intend to make Europe their home and become European *qua* Muslims, thus resisting every easy definition and challenging every possible boundary already drawn between these two civilizational identities. Understanding the Muslim immigrant as a guest that would one day return home, or a potential citizen who will one day assimilate does not necessarily interrupt given

[171] Zygmunt Bauman, "Making and Unmaking of Strangers," *Thesis Eleven* 43 (1995): 3.

[172] *Ibid*., 12. Emphasis added.

boundaries, and the figure of the young Muslim radical quite clearly performs the role of the enemy. What remains utterly strange and inexplicable is thus the "Europeans of Muslim faith, who will remain a permanent part of Europe's social and political fabric."[173]

As Europe tries to envision itself as the hallmark of peace and justice, so that the culturalist doctrine of exclusion of the extreme right cannot be fully embraced, the main issue at hand is no longer how to get rid of Muslim immigrants. As Bauman has anticipated, the problem now is to find a way of how to live with them as European Muslims, who will nevertheless always remain the stranger:

> The central question now facing Europeans and Muslims is not whether Islam can be expelled from European soil, as during the Spanish *reconquista* six centuries ago, or whether Muslims can be totally assimilated in European culture. The main questions are *how best Europe can accommodate and naturalize Islam, how Muslims can become 'European' without ceasing to be Muslim* …and how cooperative and constructive relations between Muslims and indigenous societies can be established.[174]

It is at this juncture that the idea of a "European Islam" comes in: Never fully included yet not to be effectively excluded, the project of forging a homegrown European Islam has recently been the subject of fervent discussions. Responding to the widespread acknowledgment of the fact that assimilation and integration strategies have failed, this is the convoluted search for an identity of the European Muslim rather than simply a Muslim in Europe, which engages with the construction of Euro-Islam as a sort of hyphenated personal or collective identity. This process addresses key issues such as the role of transnational networks and global dynamics, and the construction of an *Islam d'Europe* as a set of Islamic ideas, institutions and practices particular to the European context[175] – but most

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[173] Tariq Ramadan, "Europeanization of Islam or Islamization of Europe?" in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion*, ed. Shireen Hunter, (Washington: Praeger, 2002): 207.

[174] Hunter and Serfaty, "Introduction," in *Islam, Europe's Second Religion*, xv. Emphasis added.

[175] Ralph Grillo, "Islam and Transnationalism," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30, no. 5 (2004): 861-878.

importantly, as will be argued below, its public face as a challenge to the principles of the secularist narrative.

The most remarkable characteristic of recent appeals to the possibility of European Islam is the incessant determination to absolve law-abiding and sensitive Muslim citizens, or reasonable theologians capable of constructive and sincere debate, by demarcating them from the villain that appears under the pseudonym "political Islam." Bassam Tibi, who claims to have coined the term "Euro-Islam" and remains its most ardent advocate, maintains that the prospects for envisioning an Islam of Europe rests on an initial distinction between doctrinal and political Islam. Political Islam is a radical transnational worldview and the product of a recent historical conjuncture; therefore, it should not be mistaken for all of Islam in general. On the other hand, the doctrinal principles of Islam do not necessarily pose an obstacle against the "evolution of a reformed Islam more favorable to Europe." According to Tibi like many others, Islam *per se* can be Europeanized, but politicized Islam, coterminous with Islamic fundamentalism based on *sharia* and *jihad,* is "unacceptable to a Europe intent on maintaining its civilizational identity."[176]

In the wake of September 11 and the attacks in Amsterdam, London, and Madrid, the link between Islam and terrorism has become an omnipresent cause for alarm. As Mahmood Mamdani argues, the discourses that legitimize the ensuing global war on terror explicitly operate by turning "religious experience into a political category, differentiating 'good Muslims' from 'bad Muslims,' rather than terrorists from civilians."[177] Governments in Europe have also realized the importance of supporting their "good Muslim" immigrants and facilitating their political incorporation into the polity based on basic European political value orientations. In the attempt to discourage extremism, the most important social issue becomes a question of securing Muslim immigrants' loyalty to the liberal society, so that they can live as "good citizens."[178] In this political environment, the concept of Euro-

[176] Bassam Tibi, "Europeanizing Islam or the Islamization of Europe: Political Democracy vs. Cultural Difference," in *Religion in an Expanding Europe*, ed. Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter J. Katzenstein, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 205-206.

[177] Mahmood Mamdani, "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism," *American Ethnologist* 104, no. 3 (2002): 766-775.

[178] Bassam Tibi, "Europeanizing Islam or the Islamization of Europe," 209.

Islam is offered as an alternative to cultural assimilation as a framework for both securing allegiance to European values and respecting religious sensitivities. As Bhikhu Parekh contends, the pressing issue is to present a source of cultural affiliation and sense of belonging to the alienated Muslims in Europe, so that they do not seek refuge in religious extremism:

> All European countries have a small but significant rootless, deeply alienated, and sulking Muslim underclass that defines its identity in exclusively religious terms. This group sees itself as Muslims *in* Europe (that is, Muslims who happen to live in Europe without any commitment to it), not as Muslims *of* Europe (that is, those who see it as their home) or as *Europeanized* Muslims… Islam is the sole basis of their personal and public identity and is freed from the moderating influence of other identities. Since this is precisely what the Hizb ut-Tahir, the Wahhabis, the Salafis and others advocate, they gravitate towards them.[179]

Therefore, as Haddad and Golson demonstrate, European governments seem to converge on the solution to their "Muslim problem" by the institutionalization of an acceptable "Euro-friendly" Islam. Official agendas range from the encouragement of inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue to the explicit attempts to impose a state-sponsored organization of Islamic communities and the institutionalization of official representative bodies.[180] In the meantime, the definitions of "Euro-Islam" vary and are contested not only due to the diversity of social groups it aspires to represent but also those who have political interests in defining the term. For some, it represents a genuine democratic opening for fostering public debate between different value systems, or an opportunity to finally participate in the European social spheres as Muslims, and therefore feel 'at home.' For others, however, it is another instance of the Trojan horse maneuver against Europe, or a distortion of Islamic values. Meanwhile, as Enes Karic explains, governments see Euro-Islam as a means of educating Muslims on the basic principles of the secular European culture, so as to encourage the development of Islam as a secular civic religion. In

[179] Bhikhu Parekh, "Feeling at Home: Some Reflections on Muslims in Europe," *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 8 (2009): 79. Emphasis in the original.

[180] Haddad and Golson, "Overhauling Islam," 487.

this utilitarian approach, the aim is to "create a manifestation of Islam that will be 'socially desirable' in Europe—an unobtrusive Islam, in fact."[181]

Jörgen Nielsen critically argues that Euro-Islam is the ascription of a name to the movement that is already under way in the everyday lives of Muslims in Europe. As such, the term is risks essentializing the both multiple ways of being European and multiple ways of becoming European for Muslims. The effect, again, is to reduce the complicated processes of integration into a prescribed identity that differentiates between 'good' and 'bad' Muslims. This dichotomy, Nielsen observes, is particularly dangerous "at a time when Islam in the public space is too facilely viewed from the perspective of public security."[182]

From this very perspective, the intensification of dialogue with Muslims and the mutual debates on the various ways of becoming European, however cordial and well-intended they may be, do not contradict the metanarrative about Islam as a security threat. To the contrary, they function as control mechanisms and in fact legitimize the pursuit of greater security measures throughout the Western world. As Bryan Turner argues, these measures not only target intensive border control but also result in various forms of governmentality that constitute a "management of Muslims," disguised in relatively benign terminology that aim to 'upgrade' Muslims into modernity or see to their 'evolution' into the public sphere. The concept of Euro-Islam, therefore, is the manifestation of what Turner terms as the liberal mode of governmentality of religion. Significantly, "with respect to Islam, these policies tend to assume that Islam has to be modernized if it is to be compatible with liberal democratic regimes."[183]

In a seminal lecture, Etienne Balibar also notes the contradictory nature of the violent security policies waged in the name of Europe, now aggravated by the conjuncture of the global war on terror. On the one hand, he maintains, is a violent process of exclusion through a discourse of securitization. This culminates not only

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[181] Enes Karic, "Is Euro-Islam a Myth, Challenge or a Real Opportunity for Muslims and Europe?," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 22, no. 2 (2002): 435-437.

[182] Jörgen Nielsen, "The Question of Euro-Islam," 37.

[183] Bryan S. Turner, "Managing Religions: State Responses to Religious Diversity," *Contemporary Islam* 1 (2007): 124.

the enforcement of the protection of borders through military means, but also in the less explicit "*recreation of the figure of the stranger as political enemy*." This logic translates social disparities and antagonisms into the culturalized language of clash of civilizations, which Balibar contends is "potentially exterministic." On the other hand, there is a concomitant "civil process of elaboration of differences," and the debates about making Europeanness a more open and inclusive category of belonging. These processes, however, also function to neutralize and speak in the language of culture wars. The effect is to offer "a way out of the embarrassments of 'integration' and 'assimilation', and giving the now very contested idea of multicultural Europe an *active progressive content*." Balibar concludes that in so far as the emergence of the European citizen as a new figure oscillates between these two extremities, the process also installs the non-European migrants "in a condition of permanent insecurity."[184]

Most significantly, then, discourses about a homegrown and moderate Islam, which professes a secular public face and is cultured in European ways, appear at the intersection of securitization measures and the quest for a new European identity. Although the basic aim of European Islam is to find a permanent, proper, and in fact a "dignified" place for Muslims in Europe, it has the adverse effect of not eliminating but actually strengthening social boundaries. Working according to the culturalized dichotomy between good and bad Muslims and therefore retaining the metanarrative about Islam as a violent ideology, these borders select appropriate elements of Muslim identity for the mutual constitution of a new and better understanding of Europeanness.

The main problem in the quest for a European identity, in this sense, is in the attempt to "provide the basis for a community to which individuals will be admitted only on the basis of their *capacity to identify with this community's essential nature*," as White proclaims.[185] But the problem also goes further than that. As Bauman had argued, this selective permeability can no longer be achieved through

[184] Etienne Balibar, "Europe as Borderland," *The Alexander von Humboldt Lecture in Human Geography, University of Nijmegen*, Novermber 10, 2004, http://socgeo.ruhosting.nl/colloquium/ Europe%20as% 20Borderland.pdf (accessed January 10, 2010): 14-15. Emphases added.

[185] Hayden White, "The Discourse of Europe and the Search for a European Identity," 70. Emphasis added.

brute extermination or deportation. In order to be able to envision a Europe worthy of the name, the construction of social borders must not contradict the basic principles of Europeanness. Indeed, the discourse of European Islam is an implication that Europe has finally acknowledged the presence strangers in its midst, and the necessity of finding a way of living with them daily and permanently. By erasing its exclusionist (if not racist) implication through an elaborate discourse of mutual civic co-constitution, tolerance, and open dialogue, however, Euro-Islam in fact sustains the idea of a self-same Europe and even legitimates the contemporary forms of its civilizing mission.

Put simply: The figure of the Muslim is good, acceptable, and friendly as long as he can be molded in line with secular modern values and agrees to comply with the European ways of life. The good Muslim who pledges allegiance to the European polity is still a stranger, however, because he is still stubborn to retain Islam as a referent for his cultural identity. The bad Muslim is the one whose political loyalty cannot be secured in Europe but lies in a transnational *umma*. Because his utterly politicized religious worldview is based on a dichotomy between *dar-al-Islam* and *dar-al-Harb*, the unterritorializable Muslim is the enemy.

In order to rethink this dichotomous division that simultaneously accepts a Europeanized Islam but is also able to sustain the idea of a self-same and superior notion of Europeanness, it is necessary to refer to Deleuze and Guattari's reconceptualization of the term "territory." In their formulation, territory refers not only to the division of spatial units but also the articulation of the power structures within these units that produce particular subjects. To territorialize, therefore, is to categorize and install subjects within particular structures of power. Most importantly, an opposite process of deterritorialization always accompanies the process of territorialization, so that a territory is always haunted by its excesses. As Balibar explains,

> Such a process [territorialization] is possible only if other figures of the 'subject' are violently or peacefully removed, coercively or voluntarily destroyed. It is also always haunted, as it were, by the possibility that outsiders or 'nomadic subjects,' in the broad sense, resist territorialization, remain located outside the normative 'political

> space,' in the land of (political) nowhere which can also become a counter-political or an anti-political space (for which Michel Foucault coined the expression heterotopia).[186]

From this perspective, although it employs a more liberal and tolerant language than that of the extreme right, the effort to Europeanize Islam is also based on a perception of outside malevolent threats that aim to Islamicize Europe. To Europeanize Islam, in this sense, is to domesticate, civilize, and produce docile Muslims in opposition to barbarous global ones. Put in the context of the current efforts to find a more acceptable Europe, establishing an acceptable Islam as a secular civic religion consequently secures a higher ground for the civilizational basis of Europeanness based on the secularist narrative. This is achieved through an elaborate discourse of openness, dialogue and tolerance.

One of the basic premises of European Islam is civic integration through the achievement of the "liberal minimum." Liberal minimum refers to learning the language of the host societies in both the literal sense, and in the sense of being literate in its cultural and political idioms. The underlying notion is that Muslims need to get out of their parallel societies and Europeans need to break their gated communities, so that they can start to engage in dialogue and learn from each other. In reality, however, Muslims are expected to have more to learn than their European counterparts. Maintaining that integration can only be achieved by educating a civil society, for instance, Bassam Tibi interestingly recalls the postwar civic education programs:

> I am thinking in particular about the re-education programs that were carried out in Germany after the Third Reich. Social studies teachers and political science faculties were given the task of turning young people into democrats. That worked then. Why shouldn't we have a similar model for Muslims? In youth clubs, or during Islamic instruction in schools… Of course it takes a long time, 50 years say, but we have to start.[187]

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[186] Etienne Balibar, "Europe as Borderland," 4.

[187] Bassam Tibi, interview by Spiegel, *Europeans Have Stopped Defending Their Values*, (October 2, 2006).

The implicit association of Muslims with intolerance and xenophobia in this specific passage aside, the argument that civil society should be fostered through openness is a particularly forceful one. Parekh argues, for example, that the source of mistrust against Muslims in Europe lies in the fact that their political reasoning remains utterly unfamiliar to the secular European mind. In order to overcome ignorance on both sides, he calls for "more occasions for greater interaction, sympathetic dialogue, and multicultural education and for Muslim spokesmen to acquire competence in other languages, especially the secular."[188] The most common corollary of this viewpoint holds that the culture wars can only be prevented by an environment of free debate that is not intimidated by the fear of criticizing Islam: "free debate, uncensored by political correctness, and combined with a dialogue that goes beyond the rhetoric of 'Christian-Islamic understanding'' in addressing the rock bottom issues and engaging in conflict resolution."[189]

Openness, in this sense, is a very precarious notion. One the one hand, it facilitates an environment controlled only by majority perspectives and often supports anti-immigration policies. On the other hand, the need to emphasize openness is predicated precisely on the fact that Muslim leaders are always suspected of engaging in double talk and never revealing their true aims. More often than not, Muslim figures who advocate European Islam are the prime suspects with ulterior motives,[190] who are perceived to seek political leverage by sidestepping all contentious issues and appealing to the good qualities of Islamic communities.

Among these prominent public figures are the supreme Mufti of Marseille, Soheib Bencheikh, and Tariq Ramadan, a professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University. Both criticize the anachronistic use of Islamic theology and call for a thorough re-interpretation of the foundational texts; emphasize the importance of understanding how to live as a Muslim in a minority situation; and concede that human rights, freedom of conscience, and secularism serve as reliable guides for a

[188] Bhikhu Parekh, "Feeling at Home," 68.

[189] Bassam Tibi, "Europeanizing Islam or the Islamization of Europe," 223.

[190] Jörgen Nielsen, "The Question of Euro-Islam," 45.

more just social order.[191] While Bencheikh emphasizes the importance of the education of religious leaders, Ramadan stresses that Muslims must take from the European culture what is in accordance with their principles. Their joint emphasis, meanwhile, is on the premise of openness, mutual learning, and dialogue:

> Muslims will henceforth have to ask questions, not alone, not against the whole society, but with their fellow citizens through a sincere and genuine shared preoccupation. This means that a wide involvement in favor of dialogue on ethical as well as religious issues should be promoted from the grass roots up to leading and specialized institutions in all Western countries.[192]

Despite the fact that they employ the same rhetoric of openness, suspicion of secret agendas and ulterior motives also applies to liberal spokespersons, who have become notorious public figures for the Western media. On the whole, although these figures represent moderate and liberal Islam, public opinion is deeply divided over whether they are to be trusted as honest representatives of the Muslims and as advocates of European Islam, or whether they "should be considered as a wolf in sheep's clothing."[193] The reason of this discussion, meanwhile, is not determining whether there is any truth in what they are saying, or whether they actually have sincere or malevolent intentions. Rather, the point needs to be made that the notions of openness and dialogue on which the construction of a new European public sphere is founded, and which foster the development of civil society that engages freely and actively with its Muslim counterparts, should be viewed from a more critical perspective. The argument, therefore, is not that representatives of liberal Islam are unduly stigmatized but rather that European Islam emerges in relation to the discourses of Europeanness. The extent and the content of the public role of Islam in the European public sphere is determined by the limits of the discourse of openness; that is, concomitantly, of tolerance. This is apparent even in the most critical conceptualizations of the idea of Europe:

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[191] Rainer Brunner, "Forms of Muslim Self-Perception in European Islam," *HAGAR Studies in Culture, Polity and Identities* 6, no. 1 (2005): 78-79.

[192] Tariq Ramadan, "Islam and Muslims in Europe," 218.

[193] Rainer Brunner, "Forms of Muslim Self-Perception in European Islam," 80.

> An alternative starting point [for Europeanness]… happens to dig deep into a Socratic (European) definition of freedom as the product of *dialogue and engagement* rather than the product of pre-given orders of worth. Such a starting point suggests that *empathy/engagement with the stranger* could become the essence of what it is to be 'European.'[194]

These processes of dialogue, empathy, and active engagement, however, happen to take place in a social space defined and controlled by the secularist narrative, which delimits the presence of religion in the public sphere. In her discussion of liberal tolerance as a civilizational discourse, Wendy Brown also addresses the particular role played by secularization. Demonstrating that the autonomy of the individual liberal subject is predicated upon the autonomy of the state from cultural and religious underpinnings, she argues that both function as to distinguish liberal orders from fundamentalist ones. This is mainly because the articulation of state authority as secular has the effect of detaching liberal political power from any references to culture. In as much as liberalism is rendered cultureless and therefore a universalizable notion, culture is relegated to the status of the particular, which is to remain in a depoliticized, voluntary, and private domain. Secularization of the liberal state thus nourishes the idea that liberalism is ruled by law (because it can privatize and depoliticize religion), whereas non-liberal polities are bound to culture and governed by religion. What emerges is a strong antinomy between the civilized autonomous individual and the non-liberal others, "who represent the crimes of particularism, fundamentalism, and intolerance, as well as the dangerousness of unindividuated humanity."[195]

Most importantly, the autonomy of liberalism and of the sovereign subject from culture enable liberalism's unique capability of deciding on what is worthy of tolerance: "In its self-representation as the sole political doctrine that can harbor culture and religion without being conquered by them, liberalism casts itself as

[194] Ash Amin, "Multi-Ethnicity and the Idea of Europe," *Theory, Culture & Society* 21, no. 2 (2004): 3-4. Emphases added.

[195] Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006): 170-171.

uniquely tolerant of culture from its position above culture."[196] Power relations hence disappear from view when the liberal subject – as the hegemonic universal – tolerates a marked or minoritized one,[197] as a consequence of which tolerance emerges as a civilizational discourse that legitimizes the illiberal treatment of selected groups or regions that do not deserve forbearance.[198] In sum, as a mode of late governmentality, tolerance is not only a disciplinary mechanism to control "potentially ungovernable and growing number of transnational affiliations,"[199] but also appears as a "crucial analytical hinge between the constitution of abject domestic subjects and barbarous global ones, between liberalism and the justification of its imperial and colonial adventures."[200]

It is in this sense that European Islam appears as another node in the European civilizational narrative: By maintaining the European sovereign self's power to decide on the tolerable, and complying with the norms of "secular civic culture," homegrown liberal Islam in fact offers fertile ground for the morally superior, hegemonic, and universal notions of Europeanness to "upgrade," "modernize," or "civilize" the tolerable manifestations of Islam into the newly emerging European polity, while at the same time masking the power relations that underlie the social disenfranchisement and exclusion of Muslim immigrants.

Overall, Euro-Islam may or may not be a feasible ideal, it may or may not offer a sense of belonging and "at-home-ness" for Muslims; or, conversely, it may or may not be a Trojan horse. The key issue, however, is that the increasing visibility of Muslim presence, and the articulations of religious identity within the public sphere, ultimately rest within the limits of European tolerance, which in turn is predicated on the notions of autonomous individual and the secularity of the state. In this sense, the will to Europeanize Islam should be viewed from the vantage point and as part of a larger quest for a European identity. Born out of the secularist narrative, the Europeanness of Europe is contested precisely with the public character of

[196] *Ibid*., 23.

[197] *Ibid*., 186.

[198] *Ibid*., 179.

[199] *Ibid*., 95.

[200] *Ibid*., 8.

Islam. The ambivalence of the boundaries between the political, cultural, and religious spheres in the modern European face of Islam disturbs the secularist narrative, according to which societies are expected to privatize religion to its proper sphere as they become more modernized.

4.3 Becoming European, Becoming Enemy: European Legacy and the Secularist Narrative

As Armando Salvatore puts it, the neutrality of the state towards all religions and the principle of religious tolerance expected from citizens sustain a division between the public and private spheres that "provides, on the one hand, a potential for promoting civic life and securing public order, but might be inimical to communication and dialogue on the other."[201] In order to understand the peculiar problem of European Islam – the question of how to reconcile Muslimness with that of Europeanness – a critical discussion of the range of concepts around the principle of liberal tolerance is necessary; that is, secularization and the ensuing distinctions between the secular, the religious, and the political fields. The increased visibility and outspokenness of Muslims in the public sphere basically presents a challenge to the secularization thesis, which assumes that modernization goes hand in hand with secularization. This presumption prevalent in the sociology of religion has been widely challenged with new research, which shows that religion is still present in societies regarded as highly modernized, on both private and public levels.

The contemporary "resurgence" of religion as a public force has created a sense of alarm about the demise of liberal secularism, as it problematizes the given notions of the privatization of conscience and the separation of religion and politics as distinct spheres. Underpinning the debates about "political theology," "political Islam," "Islamic violence" or "religious fundamentalism," however, there is a more complicated question concerning such given notions of secularity. In *Public Religions in a Modern World*, Jose Casanova is concerned precisely with this question. Providing ample empirical evidence of the de-privatization of religion as a new global trend, Casanova goes on to reconceptualize secularity from a more flexible perspective in order to challenge the liberal theory of privatization, and

[201] Armando Salvatore, "The Euro-Islamic Roots of Secularity: A Difficult Equation," *AJSS* 33, no. 3 (2005): 425.

goes on to claim that the thesis of privatization of religion in the modern world is not only empirically but also normatively invalid. The most important corollary of this argument is that the resurgence of religions in the public sphere "can no longer be viewed simply as anti-modern religious critiques of modernity."[202]

Instead of a return to archaic traditions as a pre-modern remnant, then, the deprivatization of religion and the emergence of public religions signify a modern force and an internal critique to modernity. Far from being regressive forces, Casanova contends that they can in fact be more of a progressive nature in relation to the status quo of public spheres. In other words, public religions may indeed be beneficial to liberal democracies, and the challenge they pose is a legitimate one to the extent that they can induce a rethinking of the fundamental norms of modern societies. As "immanent critiques of particular forms of modernity from a modern religious point of view," deprivatized religions may have an important democratic function: "By entering the public sphere and forcing the public discussion and contestation of certain issues, religions force modern societies to reflect publicly and collective upon their normative structures."[203] More recently, Casanova also noted the resurgence of religion as a major critical force Europe, "the heartland of secularization." Even the sheer abundance and the proliferation of academic and popular debates on religion, politics, or interreligious dialogue, he suggests, signifies a questioning of fundamental European values. The renewed interest in the public role of religion presents crucial challenges "not only to the European model of the national welfare state, but also to the different kinds of religious secular and church-state settlements that the various European countries had achieved in post World War II Europe."[204]

The premise of constructive critique aside, the kernel of Casanova's argument holds that, like any other political actor in the public field, religious actors must also engage in public debate and rely on their powers of persuasion instead of coercion. As Salvatore observes, however, Casanova overlooks the coercive structure of the

[202] Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994): 211.

[203] *Ibid*., 228.

[204] Jose Casanova, "Public Religions Revisited," in *Religion: Beyond the Concept*, ed. Hent de Vries, (Fordham: Fordham University Press, 2008): 101.

secular public sphere itself, and tends to "reinterpret the positive legacy of secularization as an 'objective' process of differentiation of societal spheres that is not, therefore, inherently tied to any particular discourse, ideology or 'formation.'"[205] It is at this point that the criticism from Talal Asad intervenes and opens up a heated debate.

In *Formations of the Secular*, Asad observes that Casanova's argument, that deprivatization of religion does not contradict or threaten modernity, depends crucially on "*how* religion becomes public." Asad therefore emphasizes the implicit meaning in Casanova's account, in which not just *any* religion but a particular kind of religion is assumed to be compatible with modernity; namely, "only those religions that are able and willing to enter the public sphere for the purpose of rational debate with opponents who are to be persuaded rather than coerced," and those that "have accepted the assumptions of liberal discourse." From this perspective, secularism is not a neutral or objective phenomenon, but one that produces and sustains certain behaviors, forms of knowledge, and sensibilities as acceptable in modern life. Hence, secularism is not only a normative political language that functions to protect cultural homogeneity of the body politic (as in "European way of life") by delimiting the type of acceptable public discourses but also appears to sustain and even strengthen the dichotomy between liberal tolerant European versus fundamentalist intolerant others. In this sense, the exclusionary character of the secular public space cannot be overemphasized, as it is "*necessarily*, not just contingently articulated by power."[206] Due to the power relations inherent in European secular formations, the prospects of an Islam *of* Europe that might be allowed to present a legitimate alternative to the established forms of public use of argument in the secular European context seem to be rather limited. Significantly, if Europe cannot be re-wrought as social space that might allow for the articulation of "multiple ways of life and not merely multiple *identities,*" as Asad avers, it promises to be no more than a "market of an imperial civilization, always anxious about (Muslim) exiles within its gates and (Muslim) barbarians beyond."[207]

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[205] Armando Salvatore, "The Euro-Islamic Roots of Secularity," 430.

[206] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 183-184.

[207] *Ibid*., 180.

With this insight, appeals to a Europeanized Islam as an alternative dialogic project irrecoverably falter, because the effort to "Europeanize" Islam is to insert it into the politically acceptable formations of the secular in the European public sphere. As such, not only does the project of Euro-Islam fail to offer a genuine alternative framework for belonging, or an authentic opportunity for dialogue, but it also in fact consolidates the European civilizational identity on the one hand, and sustains the metanarrative about the Islamic threat on the other:

> We should heed Asad's warnings that the root of the problem, and the limitation of the solutions currently traded, lie in the fact that secularity is not easily soluble into post-secular arrangements based on any type of *'cultural dialogue'* because its institutional kernel… is intrinsically built on the European post-Christian, post-Enlightenment and post-imperial, cultural self-understanding of majorities, [who] understand themselves… as stable cultural and national, sometimes even civilizational majorities. Every group that does not belong to such a majority is, therefore, considered a minority to be *watched and monitored*, and is continuously *required to prove its loyalty*.[208]

To uncritically uphold secularism as the indispensible milestone of Western modernity, and to expect Muslims to abide scrupulously by the rules of secular public sphere, is to disregard the fact that it continues to sustain unequal power relations. To take the critique one step further, and pose a real challenge to the "triumphalist history of the secular," it is of utmost importance to realize that the spheres posited by secularism; that is, "the religious" and "the secular," are by no means essential categories.[209] In this regard, it is not enough to acknowledge that religion continues to be a pervasive power, and that its regulation in the public sphere continues to be "the lowest common denominator" of the basic secular character of the Western world that is the heir to Latin Christendom.[210] The matter

[208] Armando Salvatore, "The Euro-Islamic Roots of Secularity," 435. Emphases added.

[209] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 25.

[210] Armando Salvatore, "The Euro-Islamic Roots of Secularity," 425.

is also not simply showing that the secular is in fact religious, that it is a mask for the religious, or that "secular political practices in fact simulate religious ones."[211]

Most significantly, in order to understand how secularism today serves the discourse of power that "*legitimates itself and presents itself as secular, as if indifferent to religion yet producing religion as a generic problem*,"[212] it is necessary to turn to the role of Christianity in the formation of the secular modern:

> If secularization designates essentially a transfer having consisted of schemes and models elaborated in the field of religion; if religion thus continues to nourish modernity without its knowledge, the theory of secularization constitutes a putting into question of the two fundamental modern beliefs. Modernity would live only as something consisting of a *bequest and inheritance, despite the negations and illusions of auto-foundation.* Modernity would then not be a new time, founded and conscious of its foundations, but would be only the moment where there is effected a change of plan, a *"worlding" of Christianity.*[213]

In *Semites*, Gil Anidjar tackles precisely with the question of secular modernity as a particular worlding of Christianity, and more specifically, the conditions of the emergence of the modern category of religion and its relation to that of race. Starting from a solid conviction that the religious and the secular are co-implicated terms that have persistently functioned to mask "Christianity and Western Christendom in their transformations and reincarnations," Anidjar poses a very intriguing argument:

> Like that unmarked race, which, in the related discourse of racism, became invisible or 'white,' Christianity invented the distinction between religious and secular, and thus it made religion. It made religion the problem – rather than itself.[214]

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[211] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 26.

[212] Gil Anidjar, *Semites* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008): 51. Emphasis added.

[213] Jean-Claude Monod, quoted in Vincent P. Pecora, *Secularization and Cultural Criticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006): 5. Emphases added.

[214] Gil Anidjar, *Semites* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008): 47.

When religion is produced as the generic problem, it is also put forth as an object of knowledge, control, and criticism. Secularism, therefore, is a discourse of power that attracts mental and emotional energy into what is construed as religion, endows it with certain qualities, makes the knowledge of it desirable, thus produces and facilitates its definition.[215] This recalls, first of all, Asad's assertion that the religious and the secular are by no means essentially fixed categories. They are "hopelessly codependent," as Anidjar puts it, which makes the knowledge of one independent of the other impossible. In fact, one question is repeated almost frantically throughout *Semites*: "But what is a religion?" This suggests that to ask the question of religion as such, without reference to secularism and Christianity that produced it, is not possible. Likewise, drawing attention to the utter impossibility of the question, "Religion? In the singular?" Derrida also asserts that "the fundamental concepts that often permit us to *isolate or to pretend to isolate* the political . . . remains religious or in any case theologico-political.[216]

Secondly, the fact that secularism operates as part of a discourse that produces religion, makes it knowable, and makes us want to invest in knowing it, recalls another familiar discourse of power that produced its own referent and made the knowledge of it possible: Orientalism. A new question therefore arises. If Christianity effectively concealed itself (as the prime instance of the theologico-political) in producing religion, and if it produced religion as an invested object of knowledge and criticism, it is necessary to ask if there was a specific religion that was prescribed with this name. Anidjar explains:

> Christianity invented… Judaism and Islam as religions, and more precisely, as being at once *the least and the most religious of religions. And of races.* Subsequently, it cleared the Jews of theological and religious wrongdoings and made Islam the paradigmatic religion, the religion of fanaticism. [217]

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[215] *Ibid*., 48.

[216] Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, ed. Gil Anidjar (New York: Routledge, 2002): 63. Emphasis added.

[217] Gil Anidjar, *Semites*, 49. Emphasis in the original.

It is an extremely crucial insight that as Christianity presumed itself secular, it made Islam the paradigmatic religion, and Jews the paradigmatic race. From this perspective, Christianity, Orientalism, and secularism appear as operating within and according to the same discourses of power, and the terms are in fact interchangeable: "Orientalism – which is to say, secularism" or "Christianity – which is to say, Orientalism."[218] Most importantly, where the Orientalist, Christian, and secularist perspectives converge, the category of religion appears as part of a much larger apparatus of power, so that it cannot be thought of in isolation from the wider logic of hierarchical and discriminatory divisions that sustain irreconcilable differences between nations, cultures, races and even genders.[219]

To sum up and pose the ultimate question, then: If religion today as an administrative category seems to perform the same function, and operate according to the same discriminatory divisions, as that of race – is it not worth asking, as Meyda Yeğenoğlu suggests, whether in the contemporary discourses about Europeanness "the Orientalist configuration (which some tend to think belongs in the past) is definitely over and done with, or whether it keeps returning in different guises"?[220]

In the contemporary discourses about finding a proper 'dignified' place for Islam in Europe, Muslims are expected to assume the secular perspective, in which, paradoxically, Islam itself "oscillates between its complete lack of theological validity and a paradigmatic, extreme, religious fanaticism."[221] Accepting Islam as a permanent element in Europe in this manner is to acknowledge its "begrudged presence as desire of willed absence,"[222] so that *the becoming-European and becoming-enemy of the stranger that goes by the name Islam are two sides of the same coin*.

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[218] *Ibid*., 48-49.

[219] *Ibid*., 62.

[220] Meyda Yeğenoğlu, "The Return of the Religious: Revisiting Europe and Its Others," *Culture and Religion* 7, no. 3 (2006): 247.

[221] Gil Anidjar, *Semites*, 62.

[222] David Theo Goldberg, "Racial Europeanization," 338.

Finally, however paradoxical this may seem, the "racial Europeanization" of Islam refers not to an exclusion, but a closely monitored and controlled inclusion of religion in the public sphere, by which the authoritative power of the state is consolidated and the narrative of superior Europeanness, with its ensuing civilizational mission, is affirmed. Put differently, the paradox lies in the fact that Muslims can feel at home in Europe only on the condition that they recognize Europe as the master of that home, by whose rules they must abide. The very grammar in which those rules speak – "Orientalism, which is to say, secularism" or "Christianity, which is to say, Orientalism" – ensure that European Islam can never become more than a guest in the house of Europe. It is in this very paradox that secularism, the narrative of Europeanness, and the quest to find a permanent place for Islam in Europe are tied to the *aporetic* notion of hospitality:

> Hospitality lays down the limits of a place and retains the authority over that place, thus limiting the gift that is offered, retaining the self as *self* in one's own home as the condition of hospitality. In making this the condition of hospitality, it affirms the law of the same. Hospitality is a giving gesture. But with the hospitality as law, what this gesture in fact does is to subject the stranger/foreigner to the law of the host's home. In this way, the foreigner is allowed to enter the host's space under conditions the host has determined.[223]

Islam is allowed in the European space, becomes a visible public figure through everyday practices and political endeavors, and asserts its permanence within European public and urban spaces only under the conditions defined by the norms of Europeanness. This seemingly opening gesture – of people, places, dialogues – does not curtail the authority of European master narratives, the most persistent rule of which is secularism. *The stranger (Muslim) is thus allowed to enter the host's secular space only under the conditions that construct Islam as the enemy*. To forge a European Islam under the rules of secularism, without a radical interruption of the secular/religious division, and without referring its implication in the discourses of Orientalism and racism, is to reconsolidate the authority of the self-same European.

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[223] Meyda Yeğenoğlu, "Liberal Multiculturalism and the Ethics of Hospitality in the Age of Globalization," *Postmodern Culture* 13, no. 2 (2003).

The issue, then again, is not so much a matter of how to make this name more inclusive, but how to appropriate the excluded and make them recognize the proper name. Yet the solution to the dilemma, then again, and if there ever exists one, is not a simple refusal of Europe or of secularism. Human rights, cosmopolitan peace, justice, sovereignty and democracy – these are Europe's secular projects that have yet to achieve equality. As Anidjar asks, "Is it possible to be for or against these?" In order that these projects keep their promises, however, one should always be cautious that Europeanization of Islam is in fact "the new or resuscitated name of a not-so-new civilizing mission,"[224] whereby Europe erases its history of colonialism and racism, and ultimately forgives itself.

[224] Gil Anidjar, *Semites*, 51.

CHAPTER 5

MOSQUE CONFLICTS IN EUROPE

It is a city made only of exceptions, exclusions, incongruities, contradictions. If such a city is the most improbable, by reducing the number of abnormal elements, we increase the probability that the city really exists. So I have only to subtract exceptions from my model, and in whatever direction I proceed, I will arrive at one of the cities which, always as an exception, exists.[225]

This chapter aims to bring together previous discussions about the dilemmas of the European civilizational legacy and the problematization of European Islam into an analysis of mosque conflicts in European cities. In order to problematize the desire to find a permanent place for Islam in Europe, mosques can be taken illustratively – if not literally – as "permanent places," since the conflicts and debates over their construction offer a good interpretative framework for understanding the tensions involved when Islam, as the most deprivatized and political of religions, claims a visible and permanent place in secular public space.

In taking mosque conflicts as an interpretative framework for understanding the place of Islam in Europe, it is granted that although the form of conflicts regarding the place of religion in public sphere is linked to specific local and national contexts (with regard to Church-state relations, status of minorities, history of immigration, citizenship laws, etc.), several important themes common to all cases can be

[225] Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*.

elicited. In this analysis, therefore, the central question will be: "What are the dominant discourses through which mosques are accepted or rejected in European public space?"

In order to critically discuss the mode in which Islam is allowed to enter European public space, three cases of conflicts will be analyzed: The notorious anti-minaret legislation in Switzerland; the contested *Central Mosque* in Cologne, Germany; and the controversial *Grand Mosque* in Marseilles, France. Cases in Germany and France are chosen because they are examples of "purpose-built" mega-mosques that are favored by the state. The referendum against the building of minarets in Switzerland is chosen because it represents a case in which immediate action is taken against the visibility of mosques.

5.1 Theorizing the European City

The modern city has always been characterized by difference. Emphasizing the level of intensity with which the city embodies social differences, Roland Barthes describes them as the "place of our meeting with the other," whereas Richard Sennett suggests that urban dwellers are always "people in the presence of otherness." From the beginnings of the modern industrialized city, scholars have been fascinated with this diversity – either celebrating it as a source of energy and dynamism, or appraising it as a sign of modern alienation and loss of community. Governance of cities likewise always oscillates between enhancing or repressing this diversity. In any case, social difference remains a constant feature of urban spaces, but it is important to note that acknowledging this difference does not simply mean indulging in the flows of urban diversity, or upholding depoliticized relativism. As Jane Jacobs and Ruth Fincher put it, cities embody "located politics of difference." At the intersection of the local and the global, the particular and the universal, located politics of difference implies the complex entanglement between power, identity, and place, and emphasizes the ways in which empowerment, oppression and exclusion work through regimes of difference.[226]

[226] Jane Jacobs and Ruth Fincher, "Introduction," in *Cities of Difference*, ed. Jane Jacobs and Ruth Fincher, (New York: Guilford, 1998): 1-2.

Meanwhile, Engin Işın draws attention to the importance of the fact that difference itself has been constituted and conceptualized in diverse ways historically. Whereas, for example, in late 19th century the paradigmatic problem was the working classes, the "dangerous classes," later on the focus decisively shifts to an anxiety about the compatibility of new immigrants with the norms of the working classes already constituted. Therefore, from early 20th century onwards, the axis of class antagonisms tends to be amplified, and differences are put rather along religious, ethnic and racial lines. The primary concern then becomes the racialized and ethnicized immigrants' level of ability to fit into the urban culture; in other words, their "assimilation into the host, that is to say, dominant bourgeois, cultures of the city."[227]

Engin Işın explains that the question of difference remains as the focal point of the early theories of the modern city, but is persistently conceptualized towards assimilation of the other. Işın contends that in this early era, cities become the moors of the nation-building project. The social imagination and performance of nationalism is carried out in and through the cities that ethnically, racially, and linguistically enact the nation, produce the citizen, and draw the social boundaries of belonging:

> Both the European city and American city become prototypes of the occidental city where oriental subjects are acculturated and assimilated into bourgeois morality and they become citizens only insofar as they succeed in this assimilation… Cultivating subjects to imagine their selves as members of that imagined nation, coercing subjects into transforming their ways of being and disposition to conform with that imaginary, creating symbols, practices, icons, ideas and routines that participate in the creation of an imagined nation was all done in and through the city.[228]

Towards the end of the twentieth-century, however, the understanding of difference is transformed "from a pathos signifying afflictions of the city to an ethos

[227] Engin Işın, "Theorizing the European City," in *Handbook of Contemporary European Social Theory*, ed. Gerard Delanty, (New York: Routledge, 2006): 328.

[228] *Ibid*.

underlying the promises of the city." As differences proliferate, the ethos of pluralization becomes the prime feature of the European city and its history is recast with reference to a rediscovered cosmopolitan essence, but this reconceptualization retains the same exclusionary operations of difference. As Işın puts it, "xenophobia that mobilizes assimilation transforms itself into xenophilia that mobilizes difference."[229]

In his historical discussion of the Oriental city, Timothy Mitchell explains that the identity of the modern city is constructed in relation to an excluded outside, and that the extent of its modernity is conditional upon this constitutive outside as its exact opposite. In other words, "the city requires the 'outside' in order to present itself, in order to constitute its singular, uncorrupted identity." In this discursive operation, while the city is the place of "order, reason, propriety, cleanliness, civilization and power," what remains outside is "irrational, disordered, dirty, libidinous, barbarian and cowed."[230]

The postmodern celebration of diversity, however, has the effect of turning this discursive operation on its head. In previous sociological accounts, it was the Oriental city that was charged with absence of coherence. In the contemporary global conjuncture, however, the European city presents itself as the space that principally cultivates diversity and respects difference, in opposition to the Oriental city, which has always imposed sameness and unity through coercion.[231] This is what Engin Işın identifies as the transformation of xenophobia into xenophilia. Xenophilia, however, is an oxymoronic term that cannot escape its inherent contradictions. In looking at the contemporary celebration of diversity in the European city, and its claimed adherence to the cosmopolitan ethos in its acceptance of immigrants' mosques, therefore, one should always be cautious that the European city "cannot manage to forget its history of nationalist assimilation and xenophobia, and with the increasing appearance of oriental or Islamic others within the city, shows its strength and persistence."[232]

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[229] *Ibid*.

[230] Timothy Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996): 165.

[231] Engin Işın, "Theorizing the European City," 329.

[232] *Ibid*.

5.2 Mosques in European Cities: An Overview

In an article entitled "Europe's Mosque Hysteria," the author opens his discussion with the question, "Will minarets rise in place of the continent's steeples, or is this vision of invading Muslims hoards a mirage?"[233] Aiming to soothe the fears of an Islamic invasion of Europe and to challenge the clash of civilizations thesis, the author cites familiar arguments to suggest that Muslims are still a small minority in Europe and that there is no reason to fear a Muslim takeover. What remains interesting about the article, meanwhile, is that nowhere in the text does the author refer to mosque conflicts. Contrary to what the title suggests, then, it seems that Europe's hysteria is not specifically about mosques, but about Islam that poses a general security and identity threat to Europe. In effect, what is maintained and goes unchallenged, literally from the beginning, is that mosques are the ultimate symbols for Islamic invasion.

Stefano Allievi, as one of the prominent scholars working on the subject, observes that "mosques" and "conflict" tend to go together as the conflictual relationship between "Europe" and "Islam." His main goal then, like many others, is to undo these sets of relationships. As a conclusion of an extensive research, he asserts that "the problem of mosques in Europe is not in itself a problem. There is, however, an Islamic problem, of which mosques have become the symbol and the most visible symptom."[234] As a site of "suppressed fear," Asad avers, the "discourse of European identity is a symptom of anxieties about non-Europeans."[235] In the available repertoire of vocabularies and concepts that operate in discourses about mosques in Europe, as exemplified by Walker in the article referred to above, what needs to be emphasized is that the conditions under which mosques are accepted in the European public sphere are determined by the assertion of a certain European civilizational narrative. In order to understand the implications of mosque conflicts for Europe and its Muslim immigrants today, precisely the range of societal values that articulate this idea of Europeanness need to be problematized.

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[233] Martin Walker, "Europe's Mosque Hysteria," *The Wilson Quarterly*, Spring 2006: 14-22.

[234] Stefano Allievi, *Conflicts over Mosques in Europe.* (London: Alliance Publishing Trust, 2009): 96.

[235] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 161.

Even a cursory glance at the recent conflicts over mosques suggests that mosque represents the most frequent source of disagreement about the emergence of Islam in public sphere throughout Europe, and that its construction almost invariably faces some level of resistance from the local communities. Thus, albeit in different contexts, mosque establishment emerges as a highly contentious and "emblematic issue, around which far wider discussions… on the significance of religion, Islamic practice, public space and immigrant integration are played out."[236] In this sense, mosque debates in Europe offer a good interpretive framework for understanding not only the social construction of otherness but also the "delicate process of normalizing religious pluralism."[237]

Studies on the conflicts over mosques in Europe tend to emphasize that the form of the conflicts regarding the place of Islam in public space is linked to the specific national and local contexts.[238] Accordingly, the general trend is mainly a comparative analysis of the differences in policy approaches to the construction of mosques among different countries.[239] Public responses are therefore interpreted by taking into account a variety of factors such as the form of the state, the status of religious minorities, history of church-state relations, citizenship laws, percentages of migrant population, or the length of the period of immigration. Responses are also documented to vary in time as well, with regard to the changing global political circumstances.[240]

Then again, it is also possible to identify several features that are constant in different cases of mosque conflicts in European cities. To start with, despite the multitude of research and diversity of opinions regarding the question of Islam in

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[236] Marcel Maussen, "Making Muslim Presence Meaningful: Studies on Islam and Mosques in Western Europe," *ASSR Working Papers*, May 2005, http://www.assr.nl/workingpapers/documents/ASSR-WP0503.pdf (accessed 11 10, 2009): 4.

[237] Chantal Saint-Blancat and Ottavia S. di Friedberg, "Why are Mosques a Problem? Local Politics and Fear of Islam in Northern Italy," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31, no. 6 (2005): 1099.

[238] Jocelyne Cesari, "Mosque Conflicts in European Cities: Introduction," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31, no. 6 (2005): 1019.

[239] Marcel Maussen, "The Governance of Islam in Western Europe: A State of the Art Report," *IMISCOE*, 2007, http://www.imiscoe.org/publications/workingpapers/documents/GovernanceofIslam.pdf (accessed 11 10, 2009).

[240] Stefano Allievi, *Conflicts over Mosques in Europe*, 14.

Europe, there is a far-reaching agreement on the fact that it represents an "exceptional" case that cannot be explained in the same manner as other questions relating to religious pluralism. Most frequent basis of this observation is that the emergence of Islam in European public space often elicits unprecedented responses, which seem to contradict the secularist principle of non-interference of the state in matters relating to faith. These responses range from the creation of Islamic representative bodies reporting to the state, such as those in France, Belgium, Spain and Italy, to passing of laws that define and regulate 'ostensible religious signs,' or anti-minaret legislation such as those in Carinthia in Austria, and most recently in Switzerland.

Also, aside from the idiosyncratic experiences of Islam in the Balkans, Andalusia, and Bosnia, contemporary presence of mosques in Europe is almost exclusively associated with the presence of immigrant workers coming from Muslim countries. The rapid rise in the number of mosques since early 1980's also coincides with the realization that this is a permanent situation where there is no more the "myth of returning to the homeland."[241] With the acceptance of the fact that they are 'here to stay,' Muslim immigrants can no longer be regarded "as aliens who belonged somewhere out there" but as permanent residents who increasingly demand recognition of their religious and cultural practices. Most importantly, the emergence of a new generation of Muslims, born and educated in Europe, who "refuse to practice their religion covertly or with a sense of shame" has finally "forced Western European governments and societies to confront the cultural and political consequences of migration."[242]

Given the political investment on the issue, it should be pointed out that although the institutionalization of Islam and the construction of mosques in Europe goes on in reference to the concerns of local Muslims themselves, it has often been facilitated by other agents. Gilles Kepel, for instance, has emphasized the variety of actors and motivations involved in the rapidly proliferating mosque constructions in France: While Muslim migrants themselves want mosques for religious practice, the French government acts on the motivation to "buy social peace" by extending

[241] *Ibid*., 20.

[242] Jocelyne Cesari, "Muslim Minorities in Europe," 251.

provisions, the French industrial institutions seek to counter the "leftist presence" in workplaces, and transnational religious associations and foreign governments look to gain influence among Muslim immigrants.[243] As such, as Vertovec and Peach maintain, mosques provide "a readily visible record of Islamic community development."[244]

In this sense, the definitions, functions and symbolic meaning of mosques are subject to change in relation to the nature of Europe's experience with Muslim immigrants. There are different approaches in this regard. For instance, Allievi defines the mosque in rather extensive terms, as "all places open to the faithful, in which Muslims come together to pray on a regular basis." Within this general category, he then differentiates between several types according to the social functions they assume. So, there are "Islamic centers," which assume social, cultural and representational functions besides prayer and which are often invisible, "ad-hoc" or "purpose-built" mosques that are deliberately visible in the public space, and small invisible prayer-rooms ("basement-mosques") that are often attended only by members of a certain ethnic group.[245]

On the other hand, Marcel Maussen employs a more dynamic approach by tracing the shifting representations of the mosque in time in accordance with the changing sociopolitical environment. He observes that until late 1980's, Islam is regarded as a "'transplanted religion' practiced in a non-Muslim and secularized context," and as a part of the cultural baggage of guestworkers, who use "'Islam at home' as a model to reproduce religious practice in the new setting." Under these circumstances, Maussen notes, makeshift prayer rooms, established in private houses or abandoned commercial sites, symbolize "places of 'purity' and of 'certainty'" for the uprooted immigrants. Accordingly, they are often described as 'refuges,' 'safe havens,' 'a part of the country of origin' or as 'a place of communitarian identity.'[246] Mosques mainly tend to figure as 'symbols of settlement' in early 1990's, as the "new Islam of the young," characterized by a

[243] Gilles Kepel, "Islamic Groups in Europe," in *Islam in Europe*, 54.

[244] Vertovec and Peach, "Introduction," in *Islam in Europe,* 24-25.

[245] Stefano Allievi, Conflicts over Mosques in Europe, 17-18.

[246] Marcel Maussen, "Making Muslim Presence Meaningful," 7.

"cognitive shift" towards a more individualized, privatized, modernized, and secularized religiosity, is interpreted as contributing to the development of tolerance and civic values. However, Maussen observes, as the fear of Islamic fundamentalism begins to spread throughout the world later in the decade, the positive perception of the process of deculturation as leading to religious moderation is increasingly put into question. With the changing political climate, mosques are no longer seen as 'safe havens' but as 'Muslim enclaves' that cause the creation of 'parallel societies.' They are also invariably referred to as 'shelter mosques' that breed 'Islam of the basements.'[247]

A critical point that emerges out of such variety of definitions and shifting representations is that mosques tend to symbolize "landmarks in narratives of a linear process of emancipation and institutionalization, in which Muslims in Europe move 'from prayer rugs to minarets.'"[248] This point is particularly maintained by Jocelyne Cesari, who contends that the mosque marks not only the presence of a Muslim community, but also represents the "redefinition of public space to incorporate Islamic elements" and an "evolution of Islam from private to the public sphere."[249]

Within this perspective that takes mosque establishment as a mirror to the social position of Muslims in Europe, there is, in a sense, a diversification of mosque vocabulary: Small mosques and mosques without minarets signal marginalization, whereas establishment of larger 'Islamic centers' indicate a higher level of emancipation. A difference is also drawn between 'neighborhood mosques' and 'purpose-built mosques,' the latter of which have representative value that the former lack. The concept of 'Cathedral Mosques' has also emerged in the French context to refer to the institutionalization of "French Islam."[250] To a significant extent, the degree of acceptance that mosques achieve is taken to illustrate the level of tolerance and recognition that minority communities enjoy in the social and physical spaces of Europe. In other words, as Maussen asserts, "at the intersection

[247] *Ibid*., 13-19.

[248] *Ibid*., 22.

[249] Jocelyne Cesari, "Mosque Conflicts in European Cities," 1017-1018.

[250] Marcel Maussen, "Making Muslim Presence Meaningful," 23.

of changes of the cityscape and discourses on cultural diversity, the establishment of houses of worship are analyzed as negotiations over the 'ethnic and religious expression of rights to belong in the city.'"[251]

The most important issue to consider, then, is that not all mosques are recognized as such, and not all of them are challenged with the same intensity in their role to represent Muslims' claims to belong in Europe. Interestingly, Allievi and his research team find out that the proportion of the number of mosques to the Muslim population in European cities, contrary to the widespread assumption, is surprisingly high. However, this should not lead to the assumption that there is a causal relationship between the quantity of mosques and the number of conflicts surrounding them in Europe. Conflicts, as Allievi asserts, are not of quantifiable nature.[252] In order to understand the non-quantifiable nature of mosque conflicts in Europe, then, it is necessary to highlight the most crucial element of conflict that recurs in all cases.

Beside the technical concerns related to funding, infrastructure, aesthetics or real estate, the principle arguments expressed in all of the mosque debates are a reflection of "a meta-narrative about Islam as a security threat."[253] In most cases, although Muslim communities compromise several features such as call to prayers, muezzins, the length or presence of minarets, or agree to relocate to a peripheral area in order not to attract too much reaction, the conflict still persists. Evidently, limits to negotiation are determined by a fear of Islamization of public space and perceived threats to domestic order, culminating in the perception of the mosque as having too central a role in organizing social and cultural life and thus affecting the whole social fabric of the city beyond the Muslim community.

Under these circumstances, visibility emerges as the most important element of conflict. Denise Helly and Jocelyne Cesari emphasize that since mosques insert an inescapable sign of Islam in the urban landscape, they are effectually different from prayer halls. Whereas prayer halls can go unnoticed or be ignored by neighbors or

[251] *Ibid*., 31.

[252] Stefano Allievi, *Conflicts over Mosques in Europe*, 23-26.

[253] Jocelyne Cesari, "Mosque Conflicts in European Cities," 1020.

authorities, mosques "ostentatiously show religious belonging" and are "the living proof of the presence of Islam in a neighborhood or a city."[254] In a similar vein, Allievi notes that very few of those opposing mosques would claim that they want to prevent anyone from praying. In fact, the main basis of opposition is not that Muslims pray, but that they pray in public. In a twist of argument, opponents further claim that they are not against Islam as such, but specifically mosques. Yet, as Allievi asserts, at stake in the arguments against praying in public is the issue of visibility as the central source of alarm over symbolic appropriation of territory. In effect, mosques present more than just an architectural or urban planning issue, as the conflicts around them imply deeper-seated anxieties invested in mosques in Europe.[255]

In other words, when mosques insert such an inexorable mark of Muslim presence in European space, the terms debate are determined by their effect as "visible" signs. For supporters and opponents of mosque projects alike, the question then becomes what level and kind of visibility to tolerate, and according to which principles. It should thus be underlined that public acceptance of the mosque as a visible symbol of Islam is conditional upon its perceived level of transparency in symbolic meaning and sincerity of intentions. Recognition of this fact calls for a more critical perspective in understanding the mode in which religion is allowed to enter the European public space and the conditions under which Muslim immigrants are embraced as permanent members of the European polity.

5.3 Conflicts over Mosques in Europe: Three Cases

In a November 2009 referendum, a constitutional amendment banning the construction of new minarets was approved by 57.5% of the participating voters in Switzerland. Only 4 of the 26 Swiss cantons mostly in the French-speaking part of Switzerland opposed the initiative. Being the first time that a European country voted directly on Islam and the practices of Muslims, the notorious Swiss "Minaret verbot" was mainly perceived to have polarized a country that takes pride in showing a peaceful consensus in politics, neutrality in foreign policy and tolerance

[254] Denise Helly and Jocelyne Cesari, "Ostracism, Tolerance or Recognition: Muslims in Europe," *Migration Letters* 2, no. 3 (2005): 295.

[255] Stefano Allievi, *Conflicts over Mosques in Europe*, 13.

in human relations.[256] The campaign caused heated and long-lasting debates globally, but particularly in Europe, over the place of immigrants in democracies, what it means to be Swiss or European, and the principles of secularism and religious freedom.

The referendum was organized by a committee of politicians mainly from the right-wing Swiss People's Party (SPP) and the Federal Democratic Union (FDU), who launched a popular initiative that collected the necessary 100.000 signatures nation-wide. The party's posters have been particularly controversial, one of them depicting three white sheep kicking out a black sheep and a group of brown hands grabbing Swiss passports from a box. The other poster showed a fully veiled woman next to missile-like minarets tearing up and rising over the national flag. These posters were vehemently criticized by officials and NGO's, and the cities of Basel, Lausanne and Fribourg banned them from the billboards, retaining that they painted a "racist, disrespectful and dangerous image" of Islam. The U.N. Human Rights Committee called the posters discriminatory and declared that Switzerland would be violating international law if it bans minarets.[257]

Initiators of the referendum, however, have been persistent that because the minaret represents a bid for power, it is not a religious but a political symbol, and therefore banning them would not infringe on religious freedom. In a live television debate, SPP parliament member Ulrich Schluer engaged with a Muslim member of the Swiss Green Party. Schlue's basic line of argument was that minarets are symbols of power for Islam, which is not only a religion, but an ideology and a legal system: "History shows that wherever minarets are erected, there's an aggressive Islamic take over. Allowing minarets would mean allowing the Islamization of Switzerland." The Muslim SGP member, however, criticized the initiative for stigmatizing Muslim minorities, and drew attention to the importance of mutual respect and dialogue: "We mustn't forget that the minaret can be a symbol for

[256] Nick Cumming and Steven Erlanger, "Swiss Ban Building of Minarets on Mosques," *NY Times*, November 29, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/30/world/europe/30swiss.html (accessed September 10, 2010).

[257] Eliane Engeler, "Minaret Ban In Switzerland Set For A Vote," *Huffington Post*, November 27, 2009, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/11/27/minaret-ban-in-switzerlan_n_372026.html (accessed September 10, 2010).

something completely different: The minaret can symbolize the open mind of Swiss society, and the visibility of Muslims… who are fully integrated into Swiss society. Minaret can mean we want reconciliation, we want to talk. We want to accept others."[258]

After the referendum result was announced, Oskar Freysinger, a key figure in the campaign, took care to declare that banning the construction of minarets would not affect Swiss Muslims' right to practice their religion or to pray collectively in mosques. What the ban aimed, he stated, was to "put a safeguard on the political-legal wing of Islam, for which there is no separation between state and religion." In a similar tone, the president of SPP, Toni Brunner, commented that the voters had "clearly rejected the idea of parallel societies and the further expansion of Islam – including radical, political Islam – in Switzerland."[259]

Meanwhile, the end result was a source of shock, frustration, and regret for others. The Council of Religions, a body comprising Christian churches, Jews and Muslims, for instance, declared a deep concern about the results, and stated that despite this showcase of intolerance, "people of all faiths must work together even harder for the respect of rights of freedom, for dialogue with the Muslim community and for integration. These are the values that make Switzerland strong."[260] Minister of Justice, Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf, commented that the result reflected growing fears of Islamic fundamentalist tendencies, which should not be disregarded. Yet, she asserted, "The Federal Council takes the view that a ban on the construction of new minarets is not a feasible means of countering extremist tendencies." Commenting on the posters in an interview, Micheline Calmy-Rey, the current president of Switzerland, stated that "the campaign does not correspond to Switzerland's multicultural openness to the world." David Diaz-Jogeix, Amnesty International's deputy program director for Europe and Central

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[258] Euronews, "Debate Rages Over Swiss Minarets," *Euronews Online*, November 21, 2009, http://www.euronews.net/2009/11/21/debate-rages-over-swiss-minarets/ (accessed September 10, 2010).

[259] Thomas Stevens, "Minaret Result Seen as 'Turning Point'," *Swiss Info*, November 29, 2009, http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/Specials/Islam_and_Switzerland/Minaret_vote/Minaret_result_seen_as_turning_point.html?cid=7793740 (accessed September 10, 2010).

[260] *Ibid*.

Asia, was less lenient: "That Switzerland, a country with a long tradition of religious tolerance and the provision of refuge to the persecuted, should have accepted such a grotesquely discriminatory proposal is shocking."[261]

Many prominent scholars and intellectuals expressed their opinion about the meaning and significance of the ban. Discussions from the architectural forums, for instance, showed both dismay and support at the decision, while some commented that even the extent of the debates and media attention itself was disheartening:

> Architecture is a political act. What, where and how we build is affected by politics, but this is beyond the pale. This story has become the center of debate in architecture firms across the globe… It is the banning of minarets. If the West wants to show that it is a culture of openness and peace, this clearly sends a wrong message.[262]

In an op-ed article, John L. Esposito chastised the far right groups for refusing to accept the reality that "Islam is now a European religion," and no longer a religion of minorities or immigrants, but of citizens of European countries. Despite widespread fears of Islamic invasion, he stated, "majority of Muslims, like their non-Muslim fellow citizens, are loyal citizens." In this sense, according to Esposito, the tensions displayed by the minaret ban is not particular to Switzerland, but points to "a failure of Western liberalism and raises fundamental questions about religious discrimination and freedom of religion."[263]

It is Esposito's point of view that the critics of Islam find most precarious. According to them, this perspective suggests that Europeans have stopped defending their values, and that their well intentions are being abused by Islamists. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, one of the most vocal critics of Islam, whose screenplay for Theo van Gogh's movie *Submission* led to death threats, interprets the ban as a rejection

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[261] Nick Cumming and Steven Erlanger, "Swiss Ban Building of Minarets on Mosques."

[262] Cameron Sinclair, "Architectural 'Intolerance' in Switzerland," *Huffington Post*, December 3, 2009, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/cameron-sinclair/architectural-racism-in-s_b_378766.html (accessed September 10, 2010).

[263] John L. Esposito, "Are Swiss Alps Threatened by Minarets?," *Huffington Post*, December 02, 2009, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-l-esposito/are-swiss-alps-threatened_b_376833.html (accessed September 10, 2010).

of political Islam, not of Muslims. In this sense, she suggests, it is "a vote for tolerance and inclusion, which political Islam rejects." Likewise holding that Islam is inherently a politicized religion because it prescribes a way of life, Hirsi argues that the minaret is not a religious prescription but a symbol of Islamist supremacy, "a token of domination that came to symbolize Islamic conquest." She also rejects the criticisms posed to the supporters of the ban by declaring that citizens and decent taxpayers in fact have been more tolerant than racist towards the Muslim immigrants:

> Native Europeans have been asked over and over again by their leaders to be tolerant and accepting of Muslims. They have done that. And that can be measured a) by the amount of taxpayer money that is invested in healthcare, housing, education, and welfare for Muslims and b) the hundreds of thousands of Muslims who are knocking on the doors of Europe to be admitted. If those people who cry that Europe is intolerant are right, if there was, indeed, xenophobia and a rejection of Muslims, then we would have observed the reverse. There would have been an exodus of Muslims out of Europe.[264]

Eventually, the Swiss initiative against the building of minarets became an emblematic event for the construction of mosques all over Europe. The vote caused heated debate particularly in neighboring Germany, where the Muslim population's plans to build houses of worship has created controversy in the past. With regard to the Swiss ban, representatives of Turkish Community in Germany stated that "basic rights such as religious freedom should not be allowed to come to popular vote," and expressed their fear that "if this initiative triggers a dynamic in other European countries, then the Muslims will have no place in Europe in the end." Meanwhile, conservative German politicians emphasized the importance of the vote in reflecting the wide fear of Islam in European societies, and stated that such a vote was not applicable to the context of Germany, whose laws already provide solutions for practical decisions about minaret construction. Yet, they also

[264] Ayaan Hirsi Ali, "Swiss ban on minarets was a vote for tolerance and inclusion," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 05, 2009, http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/Opinion/2009/1205/p09s01-coop.html (accessed September 10, 2010).

expressed concerns over the building of spectacularly large structures, which are planned to "signal how strong Islam has become in Germany."[265]

One such spectacular structure, to be built in Ehrenfeld, became the reason for a fierce confrontation in September 2008 in the city of Cologne. Recent controversies over the construction of a "Central Mosque" in the immigrant district of Ehrenfeld had led to the emergence of a civil initiative called the "Pro-Köln," which attempted to organize an "Anti-Islamization Conference" in cooperation with other right-wing groups in Europe in order to challenge the mosque project. The conference could not take place, however, and met firm resistance from local authorities, residents, and various anti-fascist networks and groups, who accused the Pro-Köln of neo-Nazism and reclaimed Cologne as a multicultural and tolerant city. At the end of the day, "democracy had lost in Ehrenfeld" for supporters of the Pro-Köln, while local authorities and residents celebrated their "Nazi-free streets."

The Central Mosque affair can be traced back to 2007, when the German-Turkish Muslim community in Ehrenfeld, organized under a transnational religious organization called DITIB (Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği), applied to the City Hall of Cologne for the approval of their mosque construction project. The project aim of the mosque specifically expressed concerns for fostering inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, along with offering immigrants with a sense of belonging and identity. As they put it, "the desire of Muslims to build a house of worship means they want to feel at home and live in harmony with their religion in a society they have accepted as theirs."[266] The willingness to feel "at home" is based on the acceptance of the fact that "guestworkers" are no longer guests but are permanently "here to stay," which leads to a determination to claim a "rightful place" in German society. Director of DITIB states that the construction of the new mosque is necessary since "after 50 years in this country, it is time for us to move out of the

[265] DDP, "Swiss minaret ban sparks heated German debate," *The Local*, November 30, 2009, http://www.thelocal.de/society/20091130-23611.html (accessed September 10, 2010).

[266] Tom Heneghan, "European Mosque Plans Face Protests," *The Reuters*, August 2007, http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL3145702520070806 (accessed 12 12, 2009).

mosques in backrooms and abandoned warehouses and to worship in a real mosque, [which will be] an enriching contribution to the city."[267]

The new mosque is to be built in place of DITIB's current mosque, a converted pharmaceutical factory in Ehrenfeld, and is planned to be the largest in Europe with 55-meter-tall minarets. The proposed size of the mosque is considered to be controversial, given also that its location is in close vicinity of the famous Cologne Cathedral, with which it is perceived to be competing. The symbolic message conveyed by the design that won the open contest answers to such concerns relating to clandestine agendas of Islamization, as the mosque's main worship area is enclosed in a large glass-and-concrete dome intended to suggest openness and transparency.

This transparent style is explicitly endorsed by DITIB and is likewise appreciated by local authorities. Cologne Mayor Fritz Schramma, for instance, states that building a prestigious place of worship for Muslim immigrants "will be a step toward open dialogue and integration, and…will help build trust and public acceptance of Islam," while a representative of Roman Catholic Church on Cologne's Council of Religions comments that the architecture expresses "a bridge between Christian Europe and the style of the Ottomans." This view is also shared by District Councilman Wirges, who claims that he is not worried about the new mosque, "but rather the mosques in the backrooms and dark corners where no one really knows what they are preaching."[268] It is important to note that since Cologne was the home base for the militant Islamist Metin Kaplan, the self-designated "Caliph of Cologne," such opinions expressing security concerns based on the fear of fundamentalist Islam are frequent.

Despite efforts to alleviate fears of violence and security, there were far-reaching reactions when the plan of the mosque was accepted by the City Hall in August 2008. Jorg Uckermann, Deputy Mayor of Ehrenfeld and a former member of the CDU, was convinced that "the mosque is not a symbol of integration, …it's the

[267] Tom Hundley, "Will Minarets Rise from Skyline?" *The Chicago Tribune*, August 2007, http://archives.chicagotribune.com/2007/aug/12/world/chi-mosque_hundley_bdaug12 (accessed 10 10, 2009).

[268] *Ibid*.

symbol of an isolated enclave of Oriental culture."[269] Against such allegations, DITIB representatives take care to stress that their aim is to show that Muslims can live in peace in a society: "We are coming out of hidden places and saying, 'we are here, you can come and look in.'"[270]

The mosque project became a high-profile media issue and was brought to public attention with reactions from Ralph Giordano, a well respected German Jewish author and Holocaust survivor, who urged the city council to stop the construction. Claiming that "there is no fundamental right to the construction of a central mosque," Giordano did not hesitate to bluntly express his distaste for the mosques that were "popping up like mushrooms, named after Ottoman conquerors."[271]

It is important to note that other intellectuals shared Giordano's standpoint. In fact, several prominent leftists, liberals, women's rights activists and respected journalists have been vocal about their criticism of the mosque. Such high-profile statements had a legitimizing force for the criticism of mosque construction, since it implied that criticism of Islam was "no longer exclusively the domain of mindless xenophobes."

For instance, commenting on the naming of mosques after Turkish conquerors, a scholar from the University of Marburg expresses her doubts that under the "Islam is peace slogan," Muslims have a hidden agenda of not only "showing their presence here, but also strengthening and expanding it." Another line of argument, expressed by an Islam expert and an esteemed Green Party member, states that mosques are not strictly 'houses of prayer,' and can be more adequately described as 'multipurpose buildings.' This is based on a certain perception of Islam as "not just a religion but also a theocratic vision, in which politics and belief are inseparably bound and democracy and human rights are subordinate and conditional values," which complicates the definition of mosques as strictly religious places and has severe consequences for public policy regarding their

[269] *Ibid*.

[270] Seda Sezer, "Germany's Biggest Mosque Spurs Fear of 'Islamization' of Europe," *Bloomberg*, April 3, 2008, http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601100&sid=apSkkt0EHwf4 (accessed 10 10, 2009).

[271] Anna Reimann, "We Want the Cathedral Not Minarets," *Spiegel*, June 2007, 19, http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,489257,00.html (accessed November 10, 2009).

construction. A sociologist thus claims that granting building permits for mosques is "not a question of freedom of religion but a political question," with which the current urban policy framework in Germany is not fit to cope. She further explains that large mosques cater not only to basic religious needs but offer education centers, travel agencies, entertainment venues, shopping malls, and funeral homes. Since large mosques provide almost "everything a Muslim needs outside the apartment," the argument goes, "it allows him to have nothing to do with German society if he wants to." As such, large mosques tend to be perceived as "breeding grounds" for a parallel society and "obstacles to integration."[272]

Voicing such concerns, Giordano and other intellectuals later found themselves in an uncomfortably close company with a right-wing popular initiative called the "Pro-Köln," which emerged to wage an anti-foreigner campaign against the mosque. Pro-Köln's main argument holds that the mosque represents "a symbol of Muslim fundamentalist power" which "won't act openly," and that its construction would be "one more step towards the Islamization of Europe."[273] Deputy Mayor Uckermann states his objection to the construction of the mosque in this vein: "[People of Cologne] are for religious tolerance, not religious dominance, not for religion that calls Christians and Jews 'infidels.'"[274]

Within this perspective, the transnational financial ties that support the mosque construction project also become a target of suspicion. The necessity of reciprocity in policies towards minority religions consequently emerges as another forceful argument in the debate. Such opinions sometimes lead to the proposal of "mild" regulations that limit the length of the minaret to the length of church steeples, but also to more radical resolutions that aim to restrict mosque construction in Germany to the "same standards that are in effect for the construction of new Christian religious buildings in Turkey." It is important to note that while church representatives in Germany continuously emphasize that their approval of the mosque construction "is not contingent on Muslim countries' allowing Christians to

[272] Jochen Boelsche, "Domes and Minarets: Not in My Backyard, Say an Increasing Number of Germans," *Spiegel*. June 16, 2008, http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany /0,1518,565146,00.html (accessed 10 10, 2009).

[273] Anna Reimann, "We Want the Cathedral Not Minarets."

[274] Tom Hundley, "Will Minarets Rise from Skyline?"

build churches," some also consider the benefits of inter-faith alliance. Catholic Archbishop Meisner, for instance, has appealed to DITIB for its support for the building of a pilgrim center and a small church in Tarsus for the celebrations of St.Paul's birthday.[275]

The question of reciprocity for allowing freedom of religion is also taken up by Pro-Köln in their controversial anti-Islamization film called *Is Pro-Köln Right?*, recently made as a deliberate parallel to *Fitna*, which was produced by the Dutch politician Geert Wilders earlier in 2009. The film enumerates examples of violence against Christian minorities in "Islamic countries," which are pronounced to be "without exception ruled, to a lesser or greater extent, by totalitarian regimes which simply walk all over human rights." As the "massacre, persecution and forced Islamization of the last Christians in Turkey" are explained, the question of allowing mosque construction in Europe becomes one of tolerating foreign invasion: "Today we find the symbols of Islamic power erected in all former Christian villages [in Turkey]. But this isn't enough to meet the demands for submission from this political religion. The latest targets are the cities of Western Europe – among them, Cologne."[276]

Pro-Köln has held five seats in Cologne's city council since 2004 and has been categorized as a "far-right group" by the North Rhine-Westphalia branch of the Office for the Protection of the Constitution and has been under observation due to the fact that its "generalizing and sweeping defamation of foreigners is suspected of violating human dignity."[277] The group, however, describes itself as a "concerned citizens' response to the Islamization of Cologne and the rest of Germany," and believes that its democratic initiative has been undeservedly stigmatized as racist, xenophobic, Islamophobic, fascist or neo-Nazi. "Politicians of ruling parties do not just stubbornly deny the failure of their multi-culti policies separated from reality," Pro-Köln president Markus Beisicht asserts, "they also make every attempt to portray the courageous democrats from Pro-Köln as right-wing extremists…[Some

[275] Jochen Boelsche, "Domes and Minarets."

[276] *Hat Pro-Koln Doch Recht*, directed by Pro-Koln, 2009.

[277] Anna Reimann, "We Want the Cathedral Not Minarets."

even call us] 'Nazi filth'! That is the kind of language that I actually never want to hear again in Germany."[278]

In this sense, the group absolves itself from accusations of intolerance and xenophobia by arguing that they have the courage to be "politically incorrect" in the face of immanent dangers, and have a duty to raise public awareness about issues that are largely ignored or euphemized by left-wing multiculturalist politics. Judith Wotter, director of a local Pro-Köln branch, criticizes the inept tolerant stance of the mainstream media and politicians for misinforming the public for fear of being labeled as racist: "Unfortunately, many citizens of Cologne have no idea at all what Islamization really means and other parties are keen to hide these problems. The mainstream media are also not meeting their obligation to inform." This line of argument goes on to assert that as the media promotes a false image of Islam as peaceful and compatible with democracy, the fact that Muslims in Europe, who "capitalize on one of the most generous political periods in the human history," are more violent than any other immigrant communities goes largely unnoticed.[279]

In September 20, 2008, the popular initiative mobilized support from various far-right groups in Europe in their fight against the "Islamization of Europe," and planned to hold an "Anti-Islamization Conference" in Ehrenfeld. The conference could not take place, however, since it met fierce resistance from not only the organized alliance of local citizens and anti-fascist networks but also primarily from local authorities. Supporters of Pro-Köln and participants of the conference were denied hotel rooms and public transportation, while the decisive message of the residents' protest could be deciphered in the slogan "Kein Kölsch für Nazis." At the end of the day, while residents boasted their "Nazi-free streets," Pro-Köln president Markus Beisicht reproached the local authorities for condoning "gangs of leftists" who "suspended the freedom of speech and association in [Pro-Köln's] totally legitimate protest against the mosque." Beisicht further declared that despite the violence perpetrated by "Islamist extremists," they would continue to fight for their freedom of opinion in a "Gandhian spirit – totally non-violent, totally legal."

[278] *Hat Pro-Koln Doch Recht*, directed by Pro-Koln, 2009.

[279] *Ibid*.

Pro-Köln continues to this day, making small-scale anti-mosque demonstrations near DITIB's present headquarters on a regular basis and summoning the support of "friends from all over Europe, democrats from all over Germany to demonstrate against foreign domination, against Islamization, for our European culture, and for our democracy."[280]

Meanwhile, a very different story was going on in the Spring of 2010 for the Muslim community in the South of France, who saw the end of an almost a century old campaign for the construction of a grand mosque in Marseilles, a city with a very high Muslim population. One day after the French government approved a bill banning the full Islamic veil, and in what was deemed to be a historic and proud moment, the cornerstone was laid for the grand mosque, which boasts to be the most potent symbol of Islam's "earned place in the nation." With a minaret soaring 25 meters high, the Grand Mosque of Marseilles will hold up to 7,000 people in its prayer room when it opens in a few years, and the complex will also have facilities for a Koranic school, library, and restaurant.[281]

The Marseilles mosque project in fact dates back to 1910's, when the French colonial state started to get involved with the maintenance of mosques in its colonies with the aim of winning their loyalties, and to position itself as a 'friend of Islam' and as a 'Great Muslim Power.'[282] Given the great number of casualties among the colonial soldiers in World War I, the idea of paying tribute to the Muslim soldiers with monumental mosques became pervasive. In 1937, the founder of a real estate group in Marseilles promoted the initiative for a monumental mosque as follows:

> Our attention has been drawn repeatedly to the miserable condition of Muslims who transit our city and we have thought that it was an obligation for Marseilles to offer our Arab brothers a testimony of our

[280] *Ibid*.

[281] Adel Gastel and James Andre, "French Muslims lay first stone of Marseille mega-mosque," *France24 International News*, May 20, 2010, http://www.france24.com/en/20100520-french-muslims-lay-first-stone-mega-mosque-marseille-religion (accessed September 10, 2010).

[282] Marcel Maussen, "Islamic Presence and Mosque Establishment in France: Colonialism, Arrangements for Guestworkers and Citizenship," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33, no. 6 (2007): 989.

> affection by reserving a hostel for them... The Mosque of Marseilles will be a testimony of the French gratitude towards our Muslim brothers who have died for the fatherland.[283]

The project, then, not only aimed to pay tribute to the soldiers who died fighting for France, but to improve the conditions of Muslims who sojourned in Marseilles. Marcel Maussen particularly emphasizes the importance of the fact that the mosque was first and foremost intended to provide for ordinary North African Muslims who sojourned in or transited Marseilles. This was in contrast to the Paris Mosque, which served as an exotic getaway for the Parisian bourgeoisie and Muslim elites. In this sense, Maussen contends, "an image was created of Marseilles and North Africa as two mutually dependent entities, connected through relations of commerce, trade and a common history."[284]

The politics of the capital, however, intervened in the construction of the grand mosque. In 1950, the municipality faced a major problem when the leaders of the mosque in Paris declared that the establishment of the mosque by a committee of non-Muslim Frenchmen would be "against the Islamic tradition." The municipal council of Marseilles decided to give the land to a new committee of local Algerian Muslims who were not part of the Muslim elites. At this point, the French national government intervened directly, and declared that the municipal funding violated the 1905 Law on the Separation of Churches and the State. Maussen also refers to a report by the French Secret Services, dated April 1951, which mentioned that the French authorities feared a nationalist abuse of the mosque project in Marseilles. If not controlled by the Muslim leaders in the capital, the mosque was feared to become an enclave where "Arabs might engage in 'non-religious activities' that would be against French interests." According to Maussen's account, only the personality of Ben Ghabrit, '*ami de la France*,' was a guarantee against such developments."[285] The chances of establishing a Grand Mosque in Marseilles during colonial times were finally obliterated in the same year.

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[283] *Ibid*., 991.

[284] *Ibid*.

[285] *Ibid*., 992.

Starting in 1980's, however, the visible presence of Islam in French society started to become a highly controversial issue. It was then that the idea to establish "Cathedral Mosques" in major French cities reappeared. Public authorities began to see the multiplicity of smaller makeshift mosques in French cities as illustrative of the emergence of a so-called "neighbourhood Islam," which were seen as Muslim enclaves that hinder the immigrants' integration into the wider polity. Cathedral Mosques, on the other hand, would stand as symbols of an "Islam of France" and facilitate integration.[286]

The plans for the Grand Mosque of Marseilles were thus resuscitated in 1989, when the mayor said he hoped for a "beautiful and large mosque, whose financing and overall management would remain 'subject to public scrutiny.'"[287] He declared that he was in favour of the construction of a mosque in Marseilles only under two conditions: the management would have to be assumed by a Muslim with French nationality, and the funds from foreign countries would have to be diversified. He added that the mosque would be "a place of worship and nothing else." Since then, there has been a long-running controversy on the mosque involving the local authorities, rival leaders of Islamic organisations and representatives of migrants' homeland governments. The figures at the local level struggle over two important political stakes: total control over the religious activities in the city, and the desire to win the favour of a population that represents an important electoral potential.[288]

Between 1998 and 2001, the topic of the grand mosque became a very sensitive issue as it was adopted into the National Front's anti-immigration agenda. Since 2001, however, when the re-elected mayor announced that the project would be a leading theme in his political endeavours, there were more promising developments. On 25 June 2001, the mayor officially started the procedures for the construction, the consultation process of which lead to the creation of a representative body for the local Muslim community, the "Marseilles Coordination

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[286] Marcel Maussen, *Constructing Mosques: The Governance of Islam in France and the Netherlands*. Ph.D. thesis submitted to Amsterdam School for Social Science Research (2009).

[287] Jocelyne Cesari, "Mosques in French Cities: Towards the End of a Conflict?" *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31, no. 6 (2005): 1037.

[288] Damian Moore, "Multicultural Policies and Modes of Citizenship in European Cities," *UNESCO MOST Program*, http://www.unesco.org/most/p97mars.doc (accessed September 10, 2010).

of Muslims." Its main objectives were to represent the Muslims of Marseilles in all their diversity, to achieve better integration within the city and to manage the construction and management of the mosque.

Overall, the campaign for the Cathedral Mosque in Marseilles is carried out as a way to offer a prominent gathering place that would bring Islam "out of the basements." The new mosque is offered as a solution to help France's large Muslim minority integrate into the mainstream society and foster a form of moderate and modern Islam that also, incidentally, rejects veiling. As one Muslim representative puts it, "the construction of the Grand Mosque will serve as a showcase for Marseille's Muslims to promote the true face of Islam, an enlightened Islam."[289] Ironically, Nicolas Sarkozy was arguing in 2004 that France should update the 1905 legislation and start to accommodate "modern challenges." According to Sarkozy, then the minister of finance, "the provision of a mosque in every big town would help counter the extremism that grows in the makeshift mosques where, in some cases, untrained imams are holding prayer meetings with young people."[290]

Meanwhile, the new mosque is as much a cause for alarm as it is a source of pride. Paradoxically, as a visible sign of integration, it also sets off xenophobic anxiety, because "all these symbols reveal a deeper, more lasting presence of Islam. It's the passage of something temporary to something that is implanted and takes root."[291] Within this perspective, the grand mosque is feared to out-shadow Marseilles' iconic Notre Dame de la Garde, a 150-year-old Roman Catholic basilica located in the city's Old Port. A right-wing politician argued, for instance, that the cathedral mosque is intended to "balance off Notre Dame de la Garde and send a message from its 75-foot-high minaret that Marseille's Muslim residents are imposing their religious norms." The mosque, however, is being built far away from the

[289] Gastel and Andre, "French Muslims lay first stone of Marseille mega-mosque."

[290] Christian Fraser, "Marseille's Muslims eye long-awaited mosque," *BBC News*, July 06, 2010, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10508069 (accessed September 10, 2010).

[291] Steven Erlanger, "French Mosque's Symbolism Varies With Beholder," *NY Times*, December 27, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/28/world/europe/28marseille.html (accessed September 10, 2010).

picturesque old port and is actually located in a neglected site, to mention that of an old pig slaughterhouse, on the farthest outskirts of the city.[292]

5.4 Mosques and Muslims in Europe: Visible Buildings, Invisible Aims

These cases of debates over mosques in European cities exemplify the diverse ways in which the presence of Islam in Europe have been represented and regulated, and cover almost every theme so far discussed in this thesis. Within these cases, three crucial points that are common to all can be identified.

First of all, the conviction that Islam is a "political religion" can be detected in almost all mosque debates with varying degrees, and from all sides of the political spectrum. The most blatant view comes from the extreme right parties, which capitalize on the general fears about an imminent Islamic threat. In all three cases, right-wing initiatives bring public and media attention to the mosque project in order to wage anti-foreigner campaigns. The SPP and FDU coalition in Switzerland, the Pro-Köln movement in Germany, and the Front National in the case of Marseilles are all compelling examples of the far-right extremism in Europe, the most prominent feature of which is that they form populist, agenda-grabber, single issue parties, manipulating the already existing xenophobic tendencies in the society. Their arguments against the construction of the mosque express concerns for a creeping Islamization of European society, and cover a broad spectrum of issues related to failure of integration, reinforcement of parallel communities, violation of women's rights, and right to cultural difference in one's homeland.

By depicting Islam as a violent ideology bent on conquering Europe with its *Sharia* law, or eroding the European ways of life with the Muslims' everyday practices, these campaigns are also able to partially evade accusations of racism. As the Köln and Swiss cases demonstrate, popular xenophobic initiatives dwell on and promote their ability to criticize Islam without fear of death threats or being called racists. They contrast their outspokenness with what they depict as the feeble tolerance of liberal politicians, who cannot appreciate the extent of the threat that is under way.

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[292] Edward Cody, "In Marseille, unease over mosque project," *The Washington Post*, November 26, 2009, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/25/AR2009112503892.html (accessed September 10, 2010).

Meanwhile, another contested issue is the transnational character of Islam in Europe, which becomes a source of doubt about Muslims' loyalty particularly regarding the budgets of grand or 'Cathedral Mosques,' which are so gigantic investments that small Muslim communities cannot finance them by themselves. Unable to secure the necessary funds from their host countries, Muslim communities are often compelled to seek foreign donors, which overall tend to threaten their independence and impair their image in the public opinion. This is because with transnational economic dependency, Muslim immigrants become vulnerable to the political maneuvering of governments abroad, and the influence of transnational radical Muslim movements. This in turn feeds the concerns about the Muslim immigrants' loyalty, because transnational linkages are perceived to be encouraging an ambiguity of commitment.

This point is related to the second common theme that emerges from the cases. Because the European hosts can never be sure of the sincerity and loyalty of Muslims, a peculiar operation of intolerance in the name of tolerance becomes possible. This sheds a new light on the discourse of tolerance currently circulating throughout Europe as a contested European value that nevertheless cannot be but embraced by all sorts of political stances. The most recent examples to this peculiarity can be found among the reactions to the Minaret ban in Switzerland. Interestingly, the European value of tolerance is emphasized not only by those who oppose the ban, because it damages Switzerland's image as a "beacon of tolerance," but also by those who support it in the name of protecting tolerance as a liberal value made exclusively possible by a certain European way of life. The trope of tolerance is also taken up by Sarkozy, who also commented extensively on the Swiss ban, and stated that "the peoples of Europe are welcoming and tolerant: it's in their nature and in their culture. But they don't want their way of life, their mode of thinking and their social relations distorted."[293] Along similar lines, local authorities in Cologne renounced Pro-Köln as an intolerant far-right extremist group that damages the city's reputation, when at the same time supporters of Pro-Köln were accusing Islamic organizations for their violent intolerance towards European values. As another remarkable example of the twists and turns of the discourse of

[293] Time Magazine, "Quotes of the Day," *Time Online*, December 09, 2009, http://www.time.com/time/quotes/0,26174,1946502,00.html (accessed September 10, 2010).

liberal tolerance, major European cities – like Marseilles throughout the last century – often hear the announcements that their city should have a large mosque, although these proposals are never followed up by actions but are issued only "in order to demonstrate that the city concerned is on the same level [of openness and tolerance] as other major European cities."[294]

To refer back to Wendy Brown's conceptualization of tolerance, then, although tolerance seems to be a positive principle at face value, it "emerges as part of a civilizational discourse that identifies both tolerance and the tolerable within the West," and becomes the "crucial analytical hinge between the constitution of abject domestic subjects and barbarous global ones." In this sense, operating alongside with the culturalization of politics, tolerance emerges as a tool of "late modern governmentality" that is "invoked as a tool for managing what are construed as (nonliberal because different and nonpolitical because essential) culturalized identity claims." In one gesture, tolerance thus both depoliticizes culturalized identity claims and absolves itself from any cultural entanglement in depicting itself as a "norm-free tool of liberal governance."[295]

Discourse of tolerance as a mechanism that regulates 'abject domestic subjects' and produces non-liberal global ones is manifest in the arguments favoring reciprocity in the Cologne mosque debate. It is crucial to see that these arguments, which make mosque construction in Europe conditional upon the building of churches in "Islamic countries," are legitimized only by decontextualizing inter-state relations and positing essential civilizational differences between Europe and Islam based on the liberal value of tolerance. As a consequence, the reciprocity argument not only culturalizes what is political but also deculturalizes liberal values, which can then bid claims to universality and assume the power to identify the limits of tolerance.

The final theme that needs to be discussed relates to the secularist narrative that determines the problem of mosques' exceptionally problematic visibility in the European public space. As observed by many scholars, mosques invariably tend to produce "reflexes of collective identity" which are not present in the construction of

[294] Stefano Allievi, *Conflicts over Mosques in Europe*, 56.

[295] Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion*, 8-15.

places of worship for other minority religions in Europe. In order to account for this fact, Allievi underlines visibility as the crucial point in the processes institutionalization and acceptance, and suggests that "the day that such visibility no longer raises any problems will be the day that the integration of Islam in the European public arena is complete."[296]

Underlying this perspective is the assertion of an inherent difference between Europe and Islam. The suggestion that the presence of mosques in European public space is too visible to go unnoticed is founded the idea that Islam needs to become Europeanized, both socially, culturally, and to an important extent visibly, if it is to belong to the space in which it is present. Asad refers to this problem and asserts that due to the specific ideological construction of "Europe," "Muslims are clearly present in a secular Europe yet in an important sense absent from it." However, the exclusion of Muslims from Europe "has less to do with the "absolutist Faith" of Muslims living in a secular environment and more with European notions of "culture" and "civilization" and "the secular state," "majority," and "minority."[297]

In this sense, Cesari's assertion that the mosque represents "the evolution of Islam from the private to the public sphere" needs to be further scrutinized.[298] Significantly, the notion of "marking a presence" assumes that the Muslims were initially totally absent from the European space. Underlying the idea of a somewhat sudden resurgence of religious identities, "a return of the religious" as a pre-modern remnant, however, is the hegemonic construction of the distinction between the public and the private. Keeping in mind Asad's argument that the very distinction between the religious and the secular is produced by the secularist narrative, the idea that Islam, formerly relegated to the private domain, "evolved" to claim a place in the secular European public space is therefore highly problematic. As Connolly argues, this overlooks an inner connection between Christianity and Europe today, which resides in the demand based on the Christian Enlightenment "to disconnect the expression of religious belief from participation in embodied practices, so that it

[296] Stefano Allievi, *Conflicts over Mosques in Europe*, 42.

[297] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 159.

[298] Jocelyne Cesari, "Mosque Conflicts in European Cities," 1018.

becomes possible to imagine a world in which everyone is a citizen because religious belief is relegated to the private realm."[299]

In this perspective, the ways in which the presence of Islam is regarded as problematic crucially depends on the ways that presence is represented in public discussions. Granted that the aspects of Islamic presence are generally more susceptible to public scrutinization than any other religion, and that when Muslims make claims in the public sphere they are more often met with confrontation, what needs to be realized is how these episodes actually unfold depend crucially on how public discussions develop. As seen from the cases above, Muslim's invisibility is often just as much alarming as the highly visible one.

It is thus evident that the level of acceptance that grand mosques enjoy in the secular public sphere crucially depends on their negotiation over being "religious," "cultural," or "political" places. For instance, Allievi observes that "in Europe there is a general trend towards a kind of westernization of mosque functions, and even…, in institutional terms, their Christianization." That is, with the pressure exerted on Muslim communities to integrate, the mosque ends up being a representative body, much like the church. This in turn is often related to the process of gaining access to welfare provisions already available to other more established religious minorities, through which the mosque and its staff assume "roles and a stability that they did not have, often forcing the pace of institutionalization mechanisms."[300] Maussen further notes that since mosques start to play a key role in the organization of social life for the Muslim communities and are perceived as potential "social partners" for local administrators for the social integration of immigrants, they also became an important issue for policy makers. Although policy makers grant that the mosque is a crucial institution for the "maintenance of the well being of the newcomers," they often favor the subsidization of social and cultural – and not religious – activities that specifically "contribute directly to emancipation."[301]

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[299] William E. Connolly, "Europe: A Minor Tradition," in *Powers of the Secular Modern*, ed. David Scott and Charles Hirschkind, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006): 79.

[300] Stefano Allievi, *Conflicts over Mosques in Europe*, 21.

[301] Marcel Maussen, "Making Muslim Presence Meaningful," 9.

Meanwhile, it is important to re-emphasize the contradiction involved in the issue of visibility. Although highly visible grand mosques are often challenged with concerns over symbolic appropriation of land, they are also just as often supported as symbols of cultural openness and globalization. Offering an "open and hospitable" and more "European" image of a city, for example, "Cathedral Mosques" play an "exemplary role" by offering a respectable setting for interfaith meetings, collective ceremonies and various diplomatic events. As in the cases of Marseilles and Cologne, small and inaccessible 'neighborhood mosques' are perceived as the real problem.[302]

On the other hand, in his research focusing on mosque establishment in the colonial era, Maussen underlines an important discursive shift relating to the question of visibility. Stating that mosques in European cities tended to symbolize the strength of the empire as a great colonizer of Muslim lands, or the "appreciation of cultures of empire" in the colonial era, Maussen further explains that the assertion of symbols of Islam in European capitals was not seen as a threatening event in the early 20th century:

> In fact, the mosque primarily served to *objectify Islam in order to display Islamic culture for a non-Muslim audience*. Whilst the Parisian bourgeoisie visited the Moorish café and the Turkish bathhouse, the Algerian colonial workers who lived in the French capital worshipped in grungy prayer rooms at the edge of town.[303]

From this vantage point, it seems plausible to claim that the public acceptance of a great mosque to be built next to an ancient cathedral that earns the nickname "Rome of the North" for the city of Cologne operates in similar lines with this colonial logic, as there is apparently an Orientalist undertone to the metaphor of visibility at work here. To an important extent, it is this Orientalist obsession with visibility that produces the variety of mosque vocabulary, as its pits those that are visible and thus controllable under its gaze to those that are not. This is clearly observable in the cases of Marseilles and Cologne, but contrasts with that of Switzerland. The notion

[302] Stefano Allievi, *Conflicts over Mosques in Europe*, 51-52.

[303] Marcel Maussen, "Making Muslim Presence Meaningful," 31-32. Emphasis added.

that allowing the Muslim community to build a prestigious place of worship will be a step toward open dialogue and integration, and the conviction that relegating Islam to "backrooms and dark corners" would be a formula for radicalization are examples of this logic. As stated earlier, this discourse is also adopted by DITIB representatives, who state that they are "coming out of hidden places and saying, 'we are here, you can come and look in.'" In this perspective, the de-privatization of Islam is perceived as "going public" in the sense of bringing "into the light."

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to problematize the cosmopolitan-spirited quest for finding a proper and permanent place for Islam in Europe today, and to claim that the efforts to establish a European Islam cannot be thought in isolation from the efforts to consolidate a European identity, which still holds fast to its sense of civilization superiority. This argument was illustrated via the cases of mosque debates in European cities.

Chapter 2, entitled "Muslim Immigrants in Europe: Issues and Trends," started with an overview of the European experience with Muslims in the postwar immigration period. After an identification of historical turning points, general trends, and key issues, a critical discussion of multiculturalism was offered. The ultimate aim of the first chapter was to demonstrate that due to the existence of an overarching meta-narrative of Europeanness based on liberal civic values, integration policies cannot be explained adequately within nation-specific comparative perspectives. Europe in general is overcome by a general security panic with the apparent lack of integration among Muslim immigrants, which precipitates in an extreme skepticism about the premises and effects of multiculturalism, so that the primary concern is no longer to invest in multicultural diversity. As it is also no longer possible to aspire towards monocultural societies either, there is a general shift of emphasis towards a concern about the Muslim immigrants' loyalty, especially when multiculturalism and transnational linkages are perceived to be encouraging an ambiguity of commitment.

In the following chapter, entitled "Towards a European Europe?" the quest for a European identity was problematized. Following Talal Asad's assertion that "the problem of understanding Islam in Europe is primarily a matter of understanding

how ‘Europe’ is conceptualized by Europeans,” this chapter focused on a critical discussion of Europe as an idea and a hegemonic discourse. Within these discourses, a set of two interrelated questions was identified. The first question, “How did Europe become European?” investigates the past for the inter-civilizational dynamics that have contributed to the production of Europe as a political and cultural entity. The second question, “How European is Europe?” meanwhile, emphasizes the diversity in the continent, and tries to relate the present state of matters to a more utopian ideal of Europe. These two inquiries constantly inform each other in the critical assessment of Europe’s cultural and political borders.

The aim of Chapter 3 was to demonstrate that due to the intricate relationship between colonialism, racism, and the European civilizational narrative, positing a “unity in diversity” in Europe necessitates an erasure of its colonial past on the one hand, and its own history of antagonisms and traumatic experiences on the other. This is further related to the fact that Europe as a project, to be accepted as such, must provide a “better alternative” to the present order. The most remarkable feature of the current discourses on Europe, therefore, is the effort to invent a new “exemplary” identity that is “good and noble,” while “awakening history to its proper end” in order to pretend that it has been thus all along. Understood along the Derridean lines of inheritance and choice, this exemplarity further complicates the notion of Europe’s responsibility towards its pasts and futures.

After the demonstration of the complicated persistence of European civilization narrative in contemporary discourses, Chapter 4 went on to situate the current discussions about finding a permanent place for Muslims in Europe within the particular context of finding a proper name for Europe itself. By juxtaposing the prospects of “Europeanizing Islam” with the deep-seated fear of the “Islamization of Europe,” the main argument in the first part of this chapter held that the current discussions about finding a permanent and proper place for Islam in Europe are guided by two concerns: First, the Europeanization of Islam through dialogue with moderate elements is deemed necessary in order to prevent the radicalization of Muslims in Europe. Secondly, these efforts should be seen as another instance of the civilizational mission that Europe assumes, which emerges as a desire that the other recognizes the name Europe has chosen for itself.

The picture that unfolds throughout the discussion in Chapter 4 suggested that although the effort to Europeanize Islam employs a more liberal and tolerant language than that of the extreme right, it is also based on a perception of outside malevolent forces that aim to Islamicize Europe. To Europeanize Islam, in this sense, is to domesticate and civilize Muslims in opposition to barbarous global ones. Put in the context of the somewhat desperate efforts to come up with a more acceptable Europe, establishing an acceptable Islam as a secular civic religion consequently secures a higher ground for the civilizational basis of Europeanness. This is achieved through an elaborate discourse of openness, dialogue and tolerance.

Because the prominence of Islam in the public sphere is chiefly a challenge to the secularist narrative, there was also a critical discussion of the secularization thesis and its discontents via the intellectual exchange between Jose Casanova, who maintains that deprivatized religions are "immanent critiques of modernity from a modern religious point of view," and Talal Asad, who criticizes Casanova for basically overlooking the coercive structure of the secular public sphere itself. In Asad's account, rather than being pre-given and neutral, secularism appears as a normative political language that functions to protect cultural homogeneity of the body politic by delimiting the type of acceptable public discourses but also appears to sustain the dichotomy between liberal tolerant European versus fundamentalist intolerant others. With this insight, appeals to a Europeanized Islam as an alternative dialogic project irrecoverably falter, because the effort to "Europeanize" Islam is to insert it into the politically acceptable formations of the secular in the European public sphere. As such, not only does the project of Euro-Islam fail to offer a genuine alternative framework for belonging, or an authentic opportunity for dialogue, but it also in fact consolidates the European civilizational identity on the one hand, and sustains the metanarrative about the Islamic threat on the other.

In order to understand what this implicates, the final discussion in Chapter 4 weaved together the basic of arguments of Talal Asad and Gil Anidjar with the Derridean notion of hospitality. From this angle, the seemingly opening gesture – of people, places, dialogues – attributed to European Islam does not curtail the authority of European master narratives, the most persistent rule of which is secularism. To the contrary, the stranger (Muslim) is allowed to enter the host's

secular space only under the conditions that construct Islam as the enemy. The central argument that is presented, therefore, holds that forging a European Islam under the rules of secularism, without a radical interruption of the secular/religious division, and without referring its implication in the discourses of Orientalism and racism, is ultimately a reconsolidation of the authority of the self-same European.

With the theoretical framework and the basic arguments thoroughly presented, the last task was to bring together the dilemmas of the European civilizational legacy and the problematization of European Islam into an analysis of mosque conflicts in European cities. The simple idea behind this was that mosques can be taken illustratively as "permanent places" in order to demonstrate the contradictions of the desire to find a permanent place for Islam in Europe, and the tensions involved when Islam, as the most deprivatized and political of religions, claims a visible and permanent place in secular public space.

In order to situate the anxiety about the secular European identity within a conceptualization of modern urban identity, the last chapter started with Engin Işın's critical review of the theories of the modern European city, within which he draws attention to the importance of the fact that difference itself has been constituted and conceptualized in diverse ways historically. Işın notes that towards the end of the twentieth-century, the understanding of difference transformed "from a pathos signifying afflictions of the city to an ethos underlying the promises of the city." Although the history of the European city is recast with reference to a rediscovered cosmopolitan essence, this reconceptualization retains the same exclusionary operations of difference, however. As Işın puts it, "xenophobia that mobilizes assimilation transforms itself into xenophilia that mobilizes difference." In looking at the contemporary celebration of diversity in the European city in relation to the Muslim immigrants, and the claimed adherence to the cosmopolitan ethos, therefore, one should always be cautious that the European city "cannot manage to forget its history of nationalist assimilation and xenophobia, and with the increasing appearance of oriental or Islamic others within the city, shows its strength and persistence."

After a review of the literature about mosque conflicts in Europe and the identification of the key features, three cases of debates were presented as an

interpretative framework for understanding the place of Islam in Europe, wherein the central question was: "What are the dominant discourses through which mosques are accepted or rejected in European public space?" and three cases of conflicts were: The notorious anti-minaret legislation in Switzerland; the contested *Central Mosque* in Cologne, Germany; and the controversial *Grand Mosque* in Marseilles, France. Cases in Germany and France offered examples of "purpose-built" mega-mosques that are favored by the state, while the referendum against the building of minarets in Switzerland represented a case in which immediate action is taken against the visibility of mosques.

Finally, the themes common to all cases were identified. First of all, the conviction that Islam is a "political religion" can be detected in almost all mosque debates with varying degrees, and from all sides of the political spectrum. This point is related to the second common theme that emerges from the cases. Because the European hosts can never be sure of the sincerity and loyalty of Muslims, a peculiar operation of intolerance in the name of tolerance becomes possible. This sheds a new light on the discourse of tolerance currently circulating throughout Europe as a contested European value that nevertheless cannot be but embraced by all sorts of political stances. Lass but not least, the emblematic trope of visibility, according to which Muslim's invisibility is often just as much alarming as the highly visible one, was discussed. Recalling Talal Asad's assertion that the very distinction between the secular/ religious and private/ public is constructed by the secularist narrative itself, the Orientalist undertone to the metaphor of visibility at work was noted, and the ultimate argument presented held that the level of acceptance grand mosques enjoy in the secular public sphere depends crucially on their negotiation over being "religious," "cultural," or "political" places. All in all, these common themes underlined the fact that European civilizational narrative based on the notion of secularism is still the key element in deciding the mosques' and European Muslims' permanent place in Europe's social, urban, and political spaces.

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