

Chapter 14

Muslim Diaspora and European Identity: The Politics of Exclusion and Inclusion

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14.1 Introduction

Numerous conferences, public debates and informal meetings have sought to address the presence and relevance of diaspora communities.¹ In this respect, discussions about the Muslim diaspora in the European Union have gained significant space – a controversial topic due to the initial outlook of the so-called European project that was imagined and further constructed in line with Christian Democratic standards. As Checkel and Katzenstein (2009, p. 14) put it, ‘the historical foundations of the European Union are undeniably Christian-Democratic, a capacious political tradition that accommodates temperate offshoots of conservative political Catholicism as well as a social Catholicism’. Since then, the situation has significantly changed and many questions relating to the European Union’s willingness and capacity to accept its Muslim diaspora have emerged and required almost immediate answers.

¹The meaning of the term ‘diaspora’ has been shaped over time. For example, Gabriel Sheffer’s primary accounts described the diaspora groups as characterised by a distinctive collective identity maintained internationally by an organization of its own and by maintenance of connections to the homeland (Sheffer 1986). Later, due to numerous changing realities and conflicts, William Safran talked about diasporas as primarily representing ethnic minority communities abroad (Safran 1991), and Hazel Smith went further by examining the diaspora-conflict linkage and clearly concluded that ‘[d]iasporas intervene in conflict because they can. Diasporas without access to power of some sort, whether direct or surrogate, do not intervene in conflict’ (Smith 2007, p. 5). Finally, Milton Esman complemented the previous claims and, with regard to diaspora groups’ involvement in politics, noted that they are free to develop particular policies independently of their representative authorities: ‘They may support or oppose the government of their home country, morally, financially, and as supplies of weapons and even personnel to the faction they favour’ (Esman 2009, p. 8).

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I argue that the interaction between Europeans and Muslims has gone through four different stages: (i) invisible interaction, (ii) visible interaction, (iii) questionable interaction and (iv) necessary interaction. Accordingly, each of the above-offered understandings can help us to examine the position and behaviour of the Muslim diaspora in the European Union and its compatibility with the ideas surrounding the concept of European identity.

14.2 Muslim Diaspora and European Identity

Before the 1960s, the presence of Islam in the then European Economic Community (EEC) was almost invisible. Rare mosques and occasional gatherings in suburbs of European capitals did not represent a matter worthy of any discussion. However, in the 1960s, the trend changed rapidly as the economic growth of European countries combined with low birth rates implied that an additional labour force was needed in order to maintain the progress. In this respect, France, Germany and the United Kingdom became host countries for many Muslims. Esman (2009, p. 16) classifies them as members of a labour diaspora, usually ‘undereducated, unskilled individuals of peasant or urban proletarian backgrounds’ who migrated ‘in search of improved livelihoods and better opportunities for their children’. Although they had decided to migrate alone and support their families back home, soon after, the process of family reunification in the host country followed and this was an obvious indication that they sought to remain in Europe.

In West Germany, after the erection of the Berlin Wall, the government signed bilateral agreements with Turkey in 1961, Morocco in 1963 and Tunisia in 1965, all of them permitting the entry of cheap labour. One scholar underlined that while the foreign workers were needed to sustain high rates of growth and keep jobs in Germany, the newly introduced *Gastarbeiter* programme had no single intention to offer resettlement to the guest workers (Hollifield 1992, p. 218). Contrary to expectations, they brought their families and became permanent settlers. In the United Kingdom, although not a member state of the EEC until 1973, the first large-scale Muslim immigration began in the late 1950s. The growing number of immigrants from Asia and Africa led to the passing of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act in 1962 (Parliament of the United Kingdom 1962) and the Immigration Act in 1971 (Parliament of the United Kingdom 1971), respectively, both aimed at controlling immigration into the United Kingdom. The effect of this legislation was limited as the new immigrants came into the country based on family reunification schemes. As one study put it, the intention to limit immigration ‘generated an inflow of migrants in larger numbers, because of the already existing networks of migration – the ‘chains’ of migration in which seamen and soldiers acted as the first links’ (Pêdziwiatr 2007, p. 28).

Throughout the above-mentioned period, Western Europeans, or at least their political authorities, for the sake of economic advancement of their respective

countries, ignored the presence and religious denomination of their immigrants. However, in response to the oil crisis in 1973 and the subsequent economic recession, many European governments decided to subsidise immigrants to return to their homelands, as there was no actual need for them. This policy was not successful. Many immigrants were already second generation, locally born, and without any interest in 'returning'. For example, in France, 'very high rates of unemployment, approaching 50 %, produced sentiments of resentment, isolation, and powerlessness' and resulted in 'a street culture with the familiar accompaniment of drugs, violence-prone street gangs, petty crime, and hatred of mainstream French society' (Esman 2009, p. 27).

At this stage, it was already clear that the ambition to shape the European Community on the ideas that are primarily congruent with Roman Catholicism was going to face various challenges. Aware of the puzzle, the Europeans started to insist on a strong European identity, seeing it often as a powerful tool to face the presence of the other. At the Copenhagen European Summit of 1973, the representatives of the nine Member States of the community justified their decision to introduce the concept of European identity as a necessary step in order 'to achieve a better definition of their relations with other countries and of their responsibilities and the place which they occupy in world affairs' (European Communities 1973, p. 118). In that event, the Declaration on European Identity was released, imagining European identity as a strong construct that would complement and sustain the economic and political aspects of European integration. However, the nine did not offer any clear idea as how to achieve a common, supranational or European identity. For example, they viewed a common European civilisation as a sufficient ideal capable of dominating the existing diversity of national cultures within Europe, but still did not suggest any strategies. In addition, they wrongly argued that European unification and consequent development of a European identity were not directed against the non-Member States, even though it had already become clear that being a European state outside the European Common Market was highly frustrating. Finally, what seems most surprising is that the nine limited themselves and their ideas to the then participating members only, at once excluding any thoughts about the future composition of the community and how, if enlarged, the development of European identity could possibly change.

The successive waves of immigration and the proliferation of Muslim associations in France and Germany in the 1980s (Union des Organisations Islamiques de France, Fédération Nationale des Musulmans de France, Islamrat für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Türkisch-Islamische Union der Anstalt für Religion) fostered the relevance of Islam to the extent that it became 'an agent in the discourse of action or reaction' (Kastoryano 2004, p. 1238). This performance made a clear distinction between the two identities, European and Islamic. The 1989 headscarf affair in France, when three girls came to their public school wearing headscarves, served to demonstrate that Islamic identity in the European Union was still in the process of construction. One study looked closely at the outcome of this event that apparently challenged the relationship between the state, religion and public

opinion and noted that '[m]obilizations around the headscarf issue have strengthened the leadership of Islamic associations as representatives of a community taking shape around Islam' (ibid.: 1240).

The 2007 Berlin Declaration marked the fiftieth anniversary of the signature of the Treaties of Rome and while proudly listing European successes of the previous decades, stressed European Union's ambition to preserve 'the identities and diverse traditions of its Member States' (European Union 2007). Nevertheless, the participants admitted that we, as Europeans, are facing major challenges which do not stop at national borders and used the term EU as a response to these challenges and Europe to mark our common future (ibid.). Thus, what is the position of the Muslim diaspora and how can the increasing advocacy for a strong European identity affect its members?

14.3 Four Stages of Interaction

The very first stage of interaction between the Muslim diaspora and receiving societies in Western Europe was almost invisible. The Europeans accepted the initial influx of immigrants as necessary for a continuous economic advancement of their continent. The male labour force, while residing in Europe temporarily and expected to leave as soon as their work permits had expired, gathered at their homes and practised Islam to the extent that it did not make their presence problematic. For example, in Germany, this publicly invisible realm in the 1960s meant that the nature of exile Islam was rather quiet. More importantly, as noted by Ezli, Germany 'had conceived of immigration exclusively as working migration in which an ever fluctuating and always renewed population of workers would be involved. The cultural, and thus religious, dimension of immigration was not deemed important enough to warrant any special attention' (Ezli 2007).

The second stage of interaction, which preceded the 1973 economic disturbances in the West, was characterised by the reunion of dispersed families, a process that clearly indicated that temporary work permits would sooner or later become permanent. The growing presence of Muslims made Islam across the European Community more visible: 'The lack of social engagement and absence of welfare facilities in the early days of family reunification meant that many gladly turned to faith as solace. This would have been reinforced by low levels of education as well as the rural origin of many immigrants of all faiths, where religious organizations had played an important welfare function in the absence of any other public provision' (Pêdziwiatr 2007, p. 31). In fact, organisations such as Avrupa Milli Görüs Teskilatları/Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüs; Verband der Islamischen Kulturzentren, both active in Germany; the Union of Muslim Organizations of UK and Eire; and the United Islamic Communities in Sweden were established to provide an educational environment and to promote a political vision of Islam and Muslim unity, both inside and outside the host countries.

Aware of the increasing interactions with the host societies, some Europeans insisted on a clear division between them and European otherness. The French, for example, openly maintained that most immigrants were not part of their society and that they would probably never become part of it – an attitude that inspired immigrants' growing attachment to Islam. As correctly argued by Esman (2009, p. 24), more discrimination and exclusion led to stronger emphasis of their Islamic identity: 'They were told by religious leaders, most of whom were trained and imported from their homelands, that religion and government, church and state, cannot, under Islamic law and practice, be separated. Islam, as they preached it, is incompatible with the infidel, amoral, secular cultures of contemporary Europe'.

The third stage of interaction between the Muslim diaspora and receiving societies came with the outbreak of the 1973 oil crisis when the immigrants, although expected to leave due to the rising unemployment, decided to stay in Europe. Many of them were already granted permanent residency by the host country, had European-born children who attended local schools and spoke better French and German than Arabic or Turkish and had nowhere to return, even if they genuinely felt a desire to do so. As followed, the Europeans introduced the concept of European identity under the excuse that it would facilitate their relations with other, non-European, countries. However, the Muslim diaspora communities understood the growing advocacy for a strong European identity as a threat to their own existence in Europe and decided to place an even greater emphasis on the *Dar-al-Islam* (the world of Islam) and the *Ummah* (the community of believers) in order to secure their status.

It can be noted that the third phase of interaction was important as it encouraged serious examination of the previously ignored aspects surrounding the presence of minorities in the European Community. In his study, Habermas (2005, pp. 144–45) summarised the most relevant concerns:

Often the regulation of culturally sensitive matters, such as the official language, the public school curriculum, the status of churches and religious communities, and the norms of criminal law (e.g., those regulating abortion), but also of less obvious matters such as the status of the family and marriage-like partnerships, the acceptance of security standards, or the demarcation of the private from the public realm, is merely a reflection of the ethical-political self-understanding of a majority culture that has achieved dominance for contingent, historical reasons. Such implicitly overwhelming regulations can also spark a cultural struggle by disrespected minorities against the majority culture even within a republican polity that guarantees formally equal civil rights.

What Habermas stresses here is the presumption that the majority will try to dominate and affect the minorities in every possible aspect, as the official stipulations are not powerful enough to prevent such scenarios. To illustrate this trend, I examine the following four documents that all fit in the third stage of interaction between the Muslims and Europeans: the 1976 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the 1992 Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities, the 1993 Vienna Declaration and the 1995 Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

In regard to the 1976 covenant, it offered numerous articles that advocated for the protection of freedom of thought and religion. For example, Article 27 stipulated that '[i]n those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in communities with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language' (United Nations 1976). This sounded as congruent with the ideals of a cosmopolitan Europe, but if analysed from the present perspective, thus under the fourth stage of interaction, some societies have obviously found it difficult to respect UN suggestions. However, some other articles of the covenant have gained relevance gradually, reaching the climax after the terrible events of 11 September 2001: according to Article 18, '[f]reedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others' (ibid.).

The 1992 declaration confirmed the relevance of the previously cited Article 27 and while noting that 'the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities contribute to the political and social stability of States in which they live', its Article 1 called the states to 'protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity' (United Nations 1992). Similarly, the consequent two documents addressed the minorities by underlining that all states should 'foster greater harmony and tolerance' (United Nations 1993) and that 'any discrimination based on belonging to a national minority shall be prohibited' (Council of Europe 1995).

What we can say about the various official documents is that all of them advocated for a protection of minorities and European otherness. Different religions and languages were seen as positive aspects, contributing to a well-functioning society. However, during the third stage of interaction, the members of Muslim diaspora in Europe, their religion and languages faced a different treatment from the one promoted by internationally recognised documents. In fact, the more obvious presence of Islam in Europe in the 1980s and 1990s made the interaction between the Muslims and Europeans questionable. At this stage, the Europeans were enthusiastic about further integration of the European Community and a stronger European identity, whereas the questions regarding the Muslim diaspora were put on hold.

The last stage of interaction between the Muslims and Europeans started with the September 11 terrorist attacks, consequently complemented by the Madrid and London bombings in 2004 and 2005, respectively. This stage cannot be labelled as a stage of questionable interaction, but as of necessary interaction. The noted events showed that the ideas promoted by official documents were irrelevant as soon as the presence of the other could have undermined the local security. As one study correctly observed, the situation following the September 11 'has blurred the distinction between national and international politics when it comes to Islam. The convergence of European and American political discourse is noteworthy for the automatic correlation between the war on terrorism, internal security measures and immigration policy – always, it seems, with a focus on individuals of

a Muslim background' (Cesari 2010, p. 4). Such a correlation affected the members of Muslim diaspora in Europe considerably, as their presence became a regular matter for discussion. The media portrayed them as potential terrorists, European governments debated new sets of policies and the local public felt uncomfortable when facing them in the underground, supermarkets or health centres.

The stage of necessary interaction has encouraged numerous previously ignored questions about the Muslim diaspora in Europe. Apart from the degree of processes of acculturation, assimilation and integration, this stage has warned the Europeans that Islam is a valid component of their reality, and if not properly dealt with, the gap between the local and the other could only widen and, while creating parallel societies, has negative consequences for both. However, the European Union's official motto 'united in diversity' does sound like a promising way forward, but how much are the governments and European public willing to stick to it?

14.4 Politics of Exclusion and Inclusion

The four stages of interaction show that since their arrival to the European Community, the growing presence of Muslims has gone through different types of exclusion. Contrary to the very beginning when self-exclusion was possible, the process of family reunification and first European-born children required a different approach. In his account, Esman (2009, p. 103) writes that we can distinguish between two dimensions of adaptation by diaspora communities to host societies: (i) acculturation that implies 'acceptance and adoption of basic elements of the local culture, its language and lifestyle, its methods of working and popular entertainment, its dress codes and cuisine' and locally born generations are expected to proceed with this process even further, and (ii) social assimilation that is conditioned by 'participation in the networks of mainstream institutions – educational, economic, religious, and political – leading eventually ... to acceptance of citizenship, culminating often in intermarriage' (ibid.). However, the author himself admits that these processes are not easy, at all. In his discussion about the first generation of European-born Muslims, he notes that '[a] minority struggled to be integrated and accepted into the national mainstream, but the majority, sensing a hostile social environment and discriminatory local opportunity structure, declined to abandon their inherited identity, refusing even to attempt integration' (ibid.: 154–55). The process of integration continued to be slow due to their 'low levels of skill and education, and their persistent socio-economic marginalization, even into the second and third immigrant generations' (Joppke 2009, p. 108). For many, religion has remained an affiliation comprising all areas of life – an aspect promoted by various Muslim organisations established in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. However, some authors see such a diaspora membership as problematic, as '[i]n the following generation, the situation gets worse instead of fading away: those born in the West no longer have that identity, and some of them are tempted by the simplistic schemas proposed by Islamist preachers, so that a fantasmatic tradition becomes their mental framework' (Todorov 2010, p. 151).

European official advocacy for a strong European identity can become highly problematic if not properly addressed. According to Beck (2008, p. 165), ideas that are supporting the Christian West 'are turning Europe into a religion, almost a race, and are turning the project of the European Enlightenment on its head'. However, Islam has become part of European reality and, in fact, '[a] European civil society arises only when Christians and Muslims, white- and black-skinned democrats, and so forth, struggle over the political reality of Europe. Europe without Muslim democrats would be a Christian, and hence an un-European, Europe' (ibid.: 167). Putting the two together suggests that integration can only be successful if understood as a two-way street in which both parties must be ready to compromise. Often, the Europeans do not feel comfortable with the ideas that could challenge and possibly undermine their own status due to the accommodation of the others.

In their analysis, Beck and Grande (2008, p. 180) talk about 'the social treatment of otherness' involving 'the devaluation and exclusion of minorities, of different national, ethnic and religious traditions and identities, as a result of the 'sectional universalism' of the dominant group'. They mention what is often referred to as dual standards across the European Union: 'People defend the ideal of others' equality, while simultaneously spreading the cloak of secrecy over the fact that blacks, people of colour, Muslims, etc., are excluded from Europe's participation opportunities precisely by its social structure' (ibid.: 184–85). In their view, the official European approach is characterised by 'indifference and intolerance towards the presence of refugees, asylum seekers or other 'immigrants', many of whom, viewed more closely, are not immigrants at all, but recognized/non-recognized 'resident citizens' whose living and employment conditions have long been bound up with the history and culture of their inhospitable host country, Europe' (ibid.: 186).

However, the cited criticisms of Europe and Europeans could only be accepted if there was valid evidence that the Muslim diaspora has constantly expressed interest in acculturation, assimilation and full integration. In the past, these processes were often ignored, resulting in the self-exclusion of Muslims, as they did not make any significant steps as soon as family reunification and permanent settlement had started. They were not particularly keen on learning the local language, accepting the local dress code and tasting the local cuisine, but preferred sticking to their traditional ones. Apart from these, basic elements, other relevant aspects have been present, as well. As one study observed, many Westerners started to believe that 'there are significant differences between the advanced Western world and the rest, notably the peoples of Islam, and that these latter are in some ways different, with the usually tacit assumption that they are inferior. The most flagrant violations of civil rights, political freedom, even human decency are disregarded or glossed over, and crimes against humanity, which in a European or American country would evoke a storm of outrage, are seen as normal and even acceptable' (Lewis 2003, p. 90).

Such an approach towards otherness is likely to support (even if indirectly) policies of exclusion across the European Union, thus the preservation of parallel societies and parallel identities. Even though a growing interest in integration has been manifested since the presence of Muslims was labelled as a serious matter of concern, during the third and fourth stages of their interaction with Europeans,

we can agree that policies necessary to generate and consolidate integration are still lacking. Indeed, the Muslim diaspora has often been discriminated against. The post-September 11 period witnessed accentuation of discriminatory trends, as cultural and religious values gained political significance. In this regard, the Muslim veil is a matter of political debate that can legitimately ban it, without violating the right to religious expression, granted by the European Convention on Human Rights. In 2009, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA 2009) conducted a survey and revealed that

On average 1 in 3 Muslim respondents were discriminated against in the past 12 months, and 11 % experienced a racist crime. The highest levels of discrimination occurred in employment ... thousands of cases of discrimination and racist crime remain invisible ... People without citizenship and those who have lived in the country for the shortest period of time are less likely to report discrimination. Regarding the reasons for not reporting incidents, 59 % of Muslim respondents believe that 'nothing would happen or change by reporting' ... Ethnicity is the main reason for discrimination ... Only 10 % stated that they thought the discrimination they experienced was based solely on their religion.

This survey is important not only because it shows that being Muslim in the European Union can be rather difficult, but because it questions some of the so far self-glorified aspects of the Union, such as the respect for diversity and inclusion. Discriminatory policies in employment lead to a conclusion that the European Union is not as open as it promotes itself to be. In general, some other studies show that there are big unemployment differences between the native-born population and the immigrants: in Germany, 7 % compared to 15 % and in France, 9 % compared to 20 %, respectively (Fuller 2002). Such high unemployment rates are the main cause for the high crime rate leading to further mistrust and exclusion of the immigrant population.

Ethnic background and fashion outfit often have primacy over the educational background and professional expertise. More alarming is the fact that many Muslims believe that reporting discrimination seems pointless. Such a belief implies that the European leaders who deal with these highly sensitive issues maintain dual standards shifting from favouring diversity and inclusion to ignoring them, depending on occasion. In 2006, the estimated number of Muslims in the European Union was 16 million, and it is likely to become 52 million by the year 2014 due to a high annual population growth rate (Devetak 2010, p. 22). Surely, a more obvious presence of Muslims can become an even bigger problem if a lack of inclusion continues to dominate the interaction between the two sides.

According to Habermas (2005, p. 145), 'discrimination can be eliminated ... only through a process of inclusion that is sufficiently sensitive to the cultural background of individual and group-specific differences'. Even if we agree that this is the right strategy, Europeans find it difficult to cope with their own otherness. The events of September 11, followed by bombings in Madrid and London, shook the position of the whole Muslim diaspora to the extent as if all the Muslims had taken part in the attacks. The misinterpretation of Islam as a global threat (or in our case here, European threat) continued, as it was clearly confirmed during the 2011 shootings in Oslo when the Western media mistakenly speculated that al-Qaeda bore

responsibility for the horrendous acts. This particular approach revitalised the memories of previous al-Qaeda actions and encouraged further spread of Islamophobia.

It is true that many Europeans feel uncomfortable when confronted with different cultural backgrounds (less obvious in bigger cities) and this does not only apply to the Muslim diaspora. New enlargements of the European Union often question the compatibility of the new Member States with the old ones and readiness to adjust to new circumstances. Still, in this case, the European Union is expected to show greater tolerance and support, whereas the Muslim culture is seen to remain problematic. In this respect, we can say that the motto 'united in diversity', launched in 2000 and aimed at 'strengthening the belief that Europeans are united in working together for peace and prosperity, and that the many different cultures, traditions and languages in Europe are a positive asset for the continent' (Hemerijck 2010, p. 126), has been more successful in theory than in practice. For example, the 2005 Danish cartoon controversy, while inspired by the idea that some Muslims reject secularisation and insist on special recognition of their own religion (Rose 2005), portrayed Islam in a way that some understood it as extremely insulting. Apart from having led to numerous protests, the controversy questioned whether Europe prefers to ridicule its Muslim population rather than integrates it (Kunelius et al. 2007). In addition, some other moves across Europe, such as the 2009 Swiss vote to ban the construction of minarets and the 2010 French vote to ban Islamic full veil in public, have further challenged the politics of exclusion and inclusion.

What the above arguments suggest is that the stage of necessary interaction between the Muslims and Europeans is all about compromise. This compromise, although occasionally requiring adjustments that could be interpreted as a rejection of basic elements of someone's identity, appears necessary for a successful coexistence. The need for such a process has already been present and is likely to be even more with further enlargements of the European Union, when the size of the Muslim population will significantly increase. While the European Union claims to be committed to its potential members (Turkey and the countries of the Western Balkans), it is not clear how it plans to accommodate the new Muslims and avoid risks that could potentially divide the Union and erode its integrationist project. In this respect, Rifkin (2004, p. 266) is right when assessing the European Dream: 'Europeans want to preserve and nurture their cultural heritage, enjoy a good quality of life in the here and now, and create a sustainable world of peace in the near or not too distant future. And, on top of all this, they seek to establish a politics based on inclusivity – that is, honouring everyone's individual dream equally – a difficult challenge by any stretch of the imagination'.

14.5 Conclusion

This chapter addressed some of the aspects characterising the presence of the Muslim diaspora in the European Union. While divided into four stages, the interaction between the Muslims and Europeans has never been an easy one. From invisible to

necessary interaction, what characterise all four stages is uncertainty. At one point, the advocacy for a strong European identity seemed to be a valid response to the presence of Muslims who, on the one hand, were becoming permanent settlers but, on the other hand, struggled with acculturation, assimilation and integration in the European host societies. The launch of the motto ‘united in diversity’ did not manage to restore the lost momentum; to a certain extent, it managed to reemphasise the mistaken division between ‘us’ and ‘them’, often thought of as ‘good us’ and ‘bad them’. As one author questions: ‘Will it be the West, with its notions of territorial boundaries, market economies, private religiosity, and the priority of individual rights? Or will it be Islam, with its emphasis on the universal mission of a transtribal community called to build a social order founded on pure monotheism natural to humanity’ (Kelsay 1993, p. 117)? However, it rests on policymaking to focus on the process of inclusion and less on the ideas how to strengthen European identity that, intentionally or not, could lead to exclusion or emergence of an even stronger Islamic identity across the European Union. While some contributions manage to inspire further Islamophobia, some others try to transmit what many European Muslims see as the cosmopolitan nature of Islam and its readiness to coexist with the others.

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