

EURO-ISLAM: THE QUEST OF ISLAMIC MIGRANTS AND OF TURKEY TO BECOME EUROPEAN IN A SECULAR EUROPE

This article argues that successful integration of Muslim immigrants in Europe is the ticket for Turkey's accession to the European Union. European attitudes and policies as well as the tendencies of the Muslim community in Europe are analyzed and a road map for Euro-Islamic integration is advocated. The critical importance of secularism in Europe is underlined and means to bridge the civilizations are explored.

Bassam Tibi*

* Professor Bassam Tibi is the Director of the Center of International Affairs, University of Goettingen and teaches as Georgia Augusta Professor at the same university. He is also a Visiting Professor for Islamology at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland and a Visiting Scholar at Harvard University. Prof. Tibi's most recent books are: *The Challenge of Fundamentalism. Political Islam and The New World Disorder* and *Islam between Culture and Politics*. His forthcoming book is titled *From Global Jihad to Democratic Peace*.

What is Europe?¹ What is Islam?² Can both be related to one another? These questions are asked today with regard to two issue areas, firstly, Islamic migration to the EU and secondly, Turkey's bid for accession to the EU. There is a clear link between both. What is the answer? If one is free of essentialist approaches then one is challenged to view all issues as being in flux. Europe and the world of Islam are no exceptions in their changing identities. This is the point of departure.

Salafist and Islamist Muslims accuse Muslims who are committed to reason, such as the rationalist Mohammed Arkoun who calls for a rethinking of Islam in a changing world, of *kufri*/unbelief. An essentialist thinking underlies these accusations, leading to the belief in an immutable Islam alleged to be unchanged at any space and any time. One finds a resemblance between Islamist and Euro-centric essentialism. This is a burden both for Islamic and European civilization. Both Salafists and Islamists reject the vision of Euro-Islam,³ which I have been unfolding for more than a decade in order to establish a commonality between Islam and Europe. To argue that Islam is related to history and social realities, not a fixed scripture and thus can change, is not a deviation from the religious beliefs. In a similar vein, one can view Europe and its identity as an ever-changing civilizational entity. With this in mind I ask: What needs to be done to make real Islam, i.e. its people and societies, meet Europe, not as an idea, but as a reality and an existing *fait social*? In fact, the process of this envisioned encounter has already started, however a dangerous competition between the two is at issue. Euro-Islam is designed toward a different end: An accommodation of Islam and Europe, not a competition, let alone a rivalry. These questions and the related issues constitute the topic of this essay.

Any serious inquiry begins where other reasonings have ended. Two prestigious centers of the University of California at Berkeley that deal with Islam and Europe, i.e. the Center for Middle Eastern Studies and the Center for European Studies, have addressed the questions asked in this essay, employing my concept of Euro-Islam. The project was run between 1998 and 2000 under the title "Islam and the Changing Identity of Europe." The outcome was a book published under the title *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam?*⁴ In seeking proper answers for the questions raised, the present article is based on the findings of this publication. Being myself a Muslim, born and raised in the world of Islam, however living as a migrant in Europe struggling for recognition, I coined the term "Euro-Islam" and have been working in the service of an inter-civilizational bridging between Europe and Islam. In this inquiry, two focal issue areas are referred to in a social-scientific manner: First, the integration of Muslims fleeing poverty and pouring into rich Europe as migrants; second, the Muslim country seeking accession to the EU, i.e. Turkey. My hypothesis—based on the assumption that these two issue areas are linked—is that successful integration of Muslim migrants is the ticket for Turkey to Europe. This will be the focus of the present article. Having determined the subject matter and presented the related hypothesis, some questions need to be asked, i.e. those questions regarding the definitions of Europe and of Islam and whether they could be altered to

¹ Tibi, Bassam. (1998) *Europa ohne Identität? Die Krise der multikulturellen Gesellschaft.* (2002 new ed.) München: Bertelsmann. Tibi, Bassam. (2002) *Islamische Zuwanderung. Die gescheiterte Integration.* München: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt

² Tibi, Bassam. (2001) *Islam Between Culture and Politics.* New York: Palgrave.

³ I presented the concept of Euro-Islam in my paper 'Les condition d'une Euro-Islam' in 1992 published later in: Robert, Bistolfi and Francois Zabbal (1995) (eds.) *Islams d'Europe. Intégration ou Insertion Communautaire?* Paris: Edition de l'Aube, pp. 230-234.

⁴ See Tibi, Bassam 'Muslim Migrants in Europe: Between Euro-Islam and Ghettoization,' pp. 31-52 in Al Sayyad Nezar and Manuel Castells (2002) (eds.) *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam? Politics, Culture, and Citizenship in the Age of Globalization.* New York: Lexington Books.

establish commonalities. This line of reasoning leads to another basic question, whether Europeans and Muslims living on European soil are willing to forge a common secular identity respecting European norms and values. If the answer is yes, then: What needs to be done to reach these commonalities?

Introduction: Europe, Turkey and Islam in Flux. Changing Identities and the Quest for Euro-Islam

In a major study on *The Making of Europe*, the term “Europeanization of Europe” is coined and defined by the historian Robert Bartlett in this manner: “The Europeanization of Europe ... was indeed the spread of one particular culture.”⁵ By the term ‘culture,’ European values and norms based on a rational view of the world -since Renaissance and Enlightenment- are referred to. In short, cultural modernity is the identity of Europe.⁶ Historians are familiar with the fact that Renaissance and Enlightenment were based on Hellenized Islam (as opposed to *shari’a*-Islam) and the values of Europe itself. The separation of religion and politics, unwittingly introduced by the Reformation and the positive Roman law in a process of secularization, is an equal part of European identity. This shift in Europe from Christendom (Western Christianity) to the secular West has been addressed by scholars as a shift from Jerusalem to Athens, i.e. to the legacy of Hellenism.⁷ If this interpretation that it is established in Western scholarship is accepted then the following becomes clear:

- Europe is secular, not exclusively Christian.
- Europe is enlightened in that it has neither a racial, nor an ethnic identity; its identity is based on values which result from Reformation, Renaissance, Enlightenment and the French Revolution.
- Hellenism was a major source of inspiration in medieval Islam resulting in the unfolding of an Islamic rationalism that was passed to Europe; it follows that Islamic rationalism, not the *shari’a* Islam, was the historical bridge between Europe and the Islamic civilization.

One may be inclined to ask why only secular rationality and the related worldview and values could bridge European and Islamic civilization. The answer is: One can adopt to values, but not to religion, race or ethnicity, because those are exclusive and believed to be primordial. It follows that a Muslim country could become European by embracing the values defining secular European identity. How does this idea apply to reality? There is a case in point: The founder of modern Turkey, Kemal Atatürk, took the decision for his new country to become European. In the pursuit of the Europeanization of Turkey, Atatürk abolished the Islamic order of the Caliphate, banned the *shari’a*, the religious *waqf* foundations, the separation of gender through veiling and many other things. Within the framework of the aspired Europeanization of Turkey, the Turkish language was Latinized both in scripture and vocabulary. Atatürk also gave the country a secular constitution. Did Turkey become, through these policies, a secular and European country? There is no doubt that among the 57 Islamic countries of OIC there is no one that exceeds the degree of secularity and modernization of Turkey. But this positive statement should not lead to self-congratulating conclusions. Throughout the world of Islam there is a drive towards de-Westernization. Turkey is no

⁵ Bartlett, Robert. (1993) *The Making of Europe. Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950-1350*. Princeton/NJ: Princeton University Press, p.269.

⁶ Habermas, Jürgen. (1987) *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.

⁷ Lipson, Leslie. (1993) *The Ethical Crises of Civilization. Moral Meltdown or Advance?* London: Sage, pp. 62-66 and 78-87.

exception. Political Islam is to be found in Turkey as well.⁸ Is this an obstacle to Turkey joining the EU? This is a tough question and it touches on many aspects. One of them is the need for Diaspora Turks in Western Europe to Europeanize. (Europe has a total of 17 million Muslims, four million of which are Turkish origin.)

At present, this Islamic migrant community is changing Europe both to the better and to the worse: to the better in that Europe—which is by values non-ethnic, but in reality extremely ethnically exclusive—is becoming less ethnic and more inclusive. But the change is also taking place to the worse in that Europe is overwhelmed by migrating Salafists and Islamists who strongly advocate Islamic values which contradict secularism (veiling, *shari'a*, Qur'anic schools, etc.). The outcome of this process is open. To combat this challenge, this article argues for an inclusion of Islam and Muslims within the framework of Euro-Islam. However, this is not only a European, but also an Islamic task, even a Turkish one, because the Europeanization of Muslim Turks – of course of other Muslims, too – is the entry ticket for Turkey into Europe. Many Europeans ask: If Turkish migrants in Europe fail to become Europeans, how could Turkey itself succeed in this?

I operate in this article on the potential of two different scenarios: A positive, and a negative one.⁹ As a Europeanized Muslim and founder of Euro-Islam, I believe a positive scenario would be the successful Europeanization of Turkish migrants. The opposite would be a self-ethnicization of Muslim, i.e. also Turkish, migrants in Europe. This could also be supported, but not caused, by xenophobic discrimination and Islamophobia – leading to what the American expert on Islam, John Kelsay has described in this manner:

Western and Islamic can no longer strictly be identified with particular geographic regions ... The rapidity of Muslim immigration ... suggests that we may soon be faced to speak not simply of Islam and, but Islam in the West ... Islamic communities form a sort of sectarian enclave in ... Western culture, in the West, but not of it.¹⁰

Such a development would be a real and perceptual threat to European identity and can only be averted through integration. If this fails, it would not only be detrimental to the accession of Turkey to Europe, but it could be furthermore threatening to the Kemalist secular identity of Turkey itself. It is a fact that political Islam can be –and in fact has been– exported to Turkey from the West-European diaspora. Since the publication of Myron Wiener's *The Global Migration Crisis*, this issue is an accepted part of International Relations and security studies. In considering these facts, the Europeanization of Turkey and of the Muslim migrants would not only be the right response to the pending security threats, but would also facilitate the entry of Turkey to Europe. In this study I endeavor into analyzing Islamic migration to Europe and elucidating the alternatives of Euro-Islamic integration versus ghettoization in ethnic-religious communitarian communities.

In reiterating the assumption that Islamic migration is changing the identity of Europe, this author, a Muslim migrant and a European citizen, takes the value-orientation of Europe at face value, which means Europe is determined by secular values, not by religious or ethnic ones. As already argued, to overcome the tensions related to the competing and rival

⁸ On political Islam in Turkey see Howe, Marvine (2000). *Turkey. A Nation Divided over Islam's Revival*. Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, chapters 15 and 16.

⁹ For more details see Tibi, Bassam (1998) *Aufbruch am Bosphorus. Die Türkei zwischen Europa und dem Islamismus*. München: Diana Press in particular chapters 8, 9 and 10. Turkish edition (2000) *Boğaz'ın İki Yakası*. İstanbul: Doğan Kitapçılık.

¹⁰ Kelsay, John (1993). *Islam and War. A Study in Comparative Ethics*. Louisville: John Knox Press, pp. 117f.

assertions of a European and of an Islamic identity, combining both within the concept of a Euro-Islam is suggested. It is not only Europe, but also the Muslim migrants themselves, who are changing and face challenges in that they are caught between Europe and Islam, between options of Euro-Islamic integration and confrontation with the secular state in Europe which Islamists advocate. Of course, I do not overlook those Islamophobic Europeans who do not give Muslim migrants a chance to become European. This conflict is reflected by the recent debate in France following the release of the report on the church-state relations with a focus on the Islamic headscarf. This conflict makes clear that accepting *laïcité* is the bottom line for the integration of Muslim migrants in France. This demand applies to Europe at large. There are Islamist leaders – like the Imam of the Paris mosque – who accept this requirement, while others clearly do not. The controversy highlights – as phrased by Elaine Sciolino in the *New York Times*:

[t]he challenges that secular France – like much of Europe – faces in coming to grips with Islam ... organized groups are testing the secular French state¹¹

In this challenge, clearly, a civilizational conflict is at issue. In stating this, I do not subscribe to a Huntingtonian point of view. Earlier, I made this standing clear in public by joining the former German President Roman Herzog in arguing for “preventing the clash of civilizations.”¹² This reasoning is continued in this article in which I renew my proposition of Euro-Islam that was presented in Paris a decade ago. This Euro-Islam is not only proposed for Muslim migrants, but also for Turkey itself as the entry ticket to Europe.

A basic requirement for dealing with Islam and Europe in the age of mass migration is to be knowledgeable about both and equally to respect both identities involved. In acknowledging the value-related conflicts between both entities while basing ‘values’ in the domain of culture I also recognize the civilizational dimension of this issue and see a conflict at work, but seek a peaceful solution. I emphasize the opening of an inter-civilizational dialogue instead of focusing on a clash between Islam and Europe. The needed dialogue over values to which I subscribe presupposes an awareness of the differences and of its limits, i.e. the limits of pluralism.¹³ This endeavor requires a willingness of the involved parties to open themselves to the other in the pursuit of a cross-cultural consensus over values valid in the political culture. I respect ‘difference’¹⁴ and submit that coping with it is an essential element of tolerance and pluralism. However, I maintain that Europe has the right to maintain a European identity on its own territory and to require a Europeanization –both of states and individuals– who seek accession or immigration. At first, *laïcité* and not *shari’a* is the identity of Europe. Therefore any call for the *shari’a* in the European Islamic diaspora would dissociate Muslim migrants from Europe. In this regard, I share the view of Ernest Gellner in his criticism on cultural relativism.¹⁵ Cultural relativists conspicuously accept cultural differences neither with any limitation nor specification. However, they apply their cultural relativism only to Western

¹¹ Sciolino, Elaine (2003) ‘School Scarf Ban in France. Official Report Calls for a Law,’ *New York Times* and *International Herald Tribune* (IHT), 12 December 2003. See also the report on the following day ‘Threat on Head Scarves Angers French Muslims,’ *IHT*, 13 December 2003, p. 3.

¹² See my chapter ‘International Morality and Cross-Cultural Bridging’ in Herzog, Roman and others (1999) (eds.) *Preventing the Clash of Civilizations. A Peace Strategy for the Twenty-First Century*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, chapter 10, pp. 107-126

¹³ See the contributions to the debate run at the Erasmus Foundation in Amsterdam among Geertz, Clifford and Ernest Gellner, myself and others published in *Erasmus Ascension Symposium 1994: The Limits of Pluralism. Neo-Absolutisms and Relativism*. Amsterdam: Praemium Erasmianum Foundation.

¹⁴ See Ben-Habib, Seyla (1996) (ed.) *Democracy and Difference. Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*. Princeton/N.J.: Princeton University Press

¹⁵ Gellner, Ernest. (1992) *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion*. London: Routledge, p. 84f.

values (e.g. *laïcité*) and stop short of proceeding in a similar manner with non-Western cultures (e.g. *shari'a* Islam), even though some of them are absolutists in nature. Definitely, the *shari'a* believed to be a divine law is no cultural relativist approach. It is wrong to turn down the critique of *shari'a* as 'cultural racism.' The rampant drive to employ this relativist concept does not even halt in those cases in which such a critique of *shari'a* comes from people belonging to these very cultures –Islamic reformers and secularists. Being myself a Muslim scholar, who according to the authoritative history of Damascus descends from a centuries old Muslim-Damascene notable family (Banu al-Tibi), but lives as a migrant in Europe, I maintain that victimology, accusation, and in reverse self-accusation and self-denial are inappropriate ways for dealing with 'difference' as related to the Islamic migration to Europe. I hasten to add to the need to be knowledgeable about both Islam and Europe, another one; which is the need to be committed to both, Europe and Islam, in order to be in a position to propose feasible strategies acceptable to the parties involved. There is a need to overcome Western Islamophobia, but the demonization of Europe, as pursued by Islamists and even some Europeans themselves, is not the proper way either. A replacement of one phobia by another is not the right way to proceed, if committed to inter-cultural dialogue in the pursuit of a peaceful conflict resolution. There are two levels for dealing with Europe and Islam. First, the European level regarding accession and migration, and second the international level of foreign policy. Europeanization applies only to the first level. The focus of this inquiry is the first level, and more specifically the Europeanization of Muslim migrants that is pertinent to Turkey's bid to join the European Union.

In fact, migration to Europe is a new process in which several actors are involved. In the common debate on this issue we often hear the demand that Europe needs to change to meet the pending challenge. This is utterly correct. Also, Europe needs to adjust to the recent effects of globalization to which the inclusion of Islam into Europe belongs. Europe triggered this process itself, through the European Expansion.¹⁶ Clearly, migration has become a component of this process. However, not only Europe, but also migrants themselves need to change as well. The formula 'Remaking the Club' was recently coined to refer to changes needed in the identity of the hitherto exclusive 'Club of Europe.' Even though I concur with this demand, I strongly feel the need to add that the 'remaking' encompasses the necessity that all respective members of the 'club'-old and new as well as the migrants- need to adjust their identity. I believe this insight is missing in some of the pleas for change.¹⁷ The call for a de-ethnization of European identity must equally apply to the identity of the migrants. Otherwise we would be dealing with 'one-way-change' and 'one-way-tolerance'. I share the view of the French report of December 2003 that "France has no choice" other than prevention when facing "groups seeking to test and undermine core values"¹⁸ The Europeanization of Islam and Muslim migrants within Europe is a reasonable demand, which is also in the interest of Turkey in its claim to be accepted as a European country.

In embracing the typology of Manuel Castells concerning identity building I want to single out his ideal type of 'project identity'. This pattern means that social actors need to "build a

¹⁶ See the four volumes edited by Reinhard, Wolfgang. (1983-1990) *Geschichte der europäischen Expansion*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer and more recently Curtin, Philip D. (2000) *The World and the West. The European Challenge and the Overseas Response in the Age of Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

¹⁷ See for instance Modood, Tariq and P. Werbner (1997) (eds.) *The Politics of Multiculturalism in the New Europe*. London: Zed Books. According to Modood Europe has become "now a supranational community of cultures, sub-cultures and transcultures." The implication of this way to determine Europe is to deny Europe an identity of its own. For a different position see my book referenced in note 1 for which I use a questionmark in the title: *Europe ohne Identität?/Europe without Identity?* See Modood's contribution (chapter 6) and also mine (chapter 2) to the volume edited by AlSayyad and Castells referenced in note 4 above.

¹⁸ See note 11.

new identity that redefines their position in society ... No identity can be an essence.”¹⁹ As much as Europeans are called upon to de-ethnicize and de-essentialize their identity to allow the newcomers to become Europeans, Muslim migrants are requested to redefine their identity in the diaspora in adding a European component to it. There is no such thing as an essential, i.e. immutable and exclusive Islamic identity. I phrase my position as such on the assumption that no prudent person chooses to be alien in a society forever. I dare to add that the will of Islamists and Salafists acting within the European Islamic diaspora to change Europe but not change themselves is not reconcilable with a pluralist Europe. Muslims living in Europe need to find a commonality between themselves and European civilization. I view the de-ethnization of Europe and the rethinking of Islam as pre-requirements for the feasibility of Euro-Islam. In this context, Muslims are asked to look at their cultural identity in a more flexible manner.

In short, both actors –Europeans and Muslims– are challenged to change and to redefine their identity. One may add, that it is equally wrong to essentialize Europe as “racist, genocidal etc.” as it is to essentialize Islam in an Islamophobic manner. Europe and the World of Islam are two established civilizations with centuries old records that encompass both enmity and cordiality.²⁰ In this regard, the dichotomies built up on this legacy are not helpful. My vision of a Euro-Islamic identity for Muslim migrants in Europe is directed against constructed dichotomies–without overlooking existing conflicts over values, norms, rules and worldviews.

The Pending Issue: Muslims in Europe and the Related Facts

The term ‘New Islamic Presence’²¹ was coined to describe the increasing contemporary migration from Muslim countries to Western Europe. By the end of the Second World War there were less than one million Muslims living in Western Europe, mostly in France and the United Kingdom. The Turks among them were few. By the end of the century, the figure rose to about 15 million. Currently there are 17 to 18 million Muslims in Western Europe. Among them there are 4 million Turks (2.5 million in Germany and 1.5 million throughout Europe). Muslim migrants, who live in almost all European societies from Scandinavia to Italy, are making some demands that touch on European core values.

It is only correct to relate the presence of Islam in Europe exclusively to migration if one speaks of Western Europe. In the South East of Europe there are native European Muslims²² amounting to about 8 million. In view of the focus of this article on Western Europe I shall set aside this native Muslim-European community and concentrate on Muslim migrants in the West. Even those Muslims who were born in France, the United Kingdom or in Germany are addressed as migrants, not as natives because the second and even the third generation of Muslim migrants are still not accepted in Europe as belonging to the existing polity and they largely do not consider themselves Europeans. This needs to be changed. In many cases it is even an upgrading to be considered a migrant compared with the placing in society as ‘Gastarbeiter,’ i.e. as temporary residents. In considering their present legal and social status, I continue to address Muslims in Western Europe as migrants struggling for citizenship and

¹⁹ Castells, Manuel (1997) *The Power of Identity*. Oxford: Blackwell, p. 8.

²⁰ See Watt, William M. (1991) *Muslim-Christian Encounters. Perceptions and Misperceptions*. London: Routledge and Norman, Daniel. (1993) *Islam and the West. The Making of an Image*. Oxford: Oneworld

²¹ This term was coined by Gerholm, Tomas and Yngve G. Lithman (1988) (eds.) *The New Islamic Presence in Western Europe*. London: Mansell.

²² See Lockwood, William G. (1975) *European Moslems*. New York: Academic Press and Bringa, Tone (1995) *Being Muslim the Bosnian Way*. Princeton/NJ: Princeton University Press

acceptance, but who in return are expected to acknowledge Europe's identity and to incorporate it in their own.

To begin with, it is wrong to talk in general about Muslims in Europe while overlooking the basic fact that the related migrant community is ethnically and politically multifaceted; it is also divided along sectarian lines. Muslims living in France were and still are predominantly migrants from the Maghreb,²³ whereas those living in the United Kingdom²⁴ were and still are from South Asia (Pakistan, India and Bangladesh). Until the early 1960s the Muslim presence in these European states has been almost exclusively related to the French colonial rule in North Africa and to the British colonial rule on the Indian subcontinent.

Since the 1960s this situation has been changing in two ways. First, Turks migrating to Germany and later elsewhere have become a new segment of Muslim migration. Second, the new pattern of the labor migration was linked to the booming European economies. The need of the West European countries for labor was combined with lower rates of demographic growth. In this context, West-European countries other than France and the United Kingdom encouraged people from the Mediterranean to come to Western Europe to earn their living.

Until the end of the Cold War and the opening of borders²⁵ there was little talk about migration in Western Europe. In Germany²⁶, for instance, the majority of workers, (not only the Turks, but also South and South-East Europeans working in German factories) were perceived as 'Gastarbeiter/guest workers.' Critically minded Germans state with prudence and repentance: "We have imported labor and have overlooked the fact that we were importing human beings." However, things are changing. The German official slogan "We are not a country for migration" has only recently been replaced reluctantly, but in its 1997 documentary about 'Foreigners Residing in Germany' the office of the Commissioner for Issues Concerning Aliens (Regierungsbeauftragte für Ausländerfragen) used the very term "migration."²⁷ Among these legal aliens there exists a considerable Muslim community of about 3.7 million (2.5 million of them are Turks and Kurds). The Social Democratic-Green German coalition government expressed its open-mindedness in legislating a new citizenship law in 2000. But it continues to overlook the difference between integration and simply granting a German passport. In a country like Germany with no tradition of citizenship/*citoyennité*, receiving a passport is no more than acquiring a piece of paper, i.e. not a measure of true integration into a polity.

Beyond the quoted sarcasm it is a fact that the majority of the new Muslim labor force coming to Western Europe, in particular the Turks migrating to Germany—compared with other Turks (e.g. Turkish migrants to the USA)—have come from rural areas and have quite a low level of education and training. It follows that these Muslim migrants not only lack technical skills, but also have little knowledge about their own religion and culture. Most importantly elites, who can serve as spokespersons for this community, are mostly lacking. It is alarming that

²³ Hargreaves, Alec G. (1995) *Immigration, 'Race' and Ethnicity in Contemporary France*. London: Routledge. See also Kepel, Gilles. (1987) *Les banlieues de l'Islam. Naissance d'une religion en France*. Paris: Edition du Seuil.

²⁴ Lewis, Philip. (1992) *Islamic Britain. Religion, Politics and Identity Among British Muslims*. London: Tauris, 2002 edition.

²⁵ See the chapter on migration in Anderson, Malcolm. (1996) *Frontiers. Territory and State Formation in the Modern World*. Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 127-150

²⁶ Martin, Philip 'Germany: Reluctant Land of Immigration,' in Cornelius, Wayne A. and others (1994) (eds.) *Controlling Immigration. A Global Perspective*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp. 189-225.

²⁷ The Commissioner for Issues Concerning Aliens, Schmalz-Jacobsen, Cornelia (1997) (ed.) *Migration und Integration in Zahlen. Ein Handbuch*. Bonn: Government Publication, 1997.

spokespersons are coming from outside and virtually being imposed on the migrant community without grasping their needs. I refer to those Imams, Turkish and other, who do not speak German, English or French and have no clue about the problems and concerns of young Muslims born in Western Europe. The imposed Imams are either from Islamist groups or are appointed by Muslim governments like Turkey, Morocco etc. Even Saudi Arabia is acquiring considerable impact through providing petro-dollar funds for appointing Imams in Germany despite the fact that there are virtually no Saudi migrants in this country. In this regard Germany is the most extreme case. The Saudi funded Fahd academy in Bonn educates some five hundred young Muslims in Wahhabi Islam and thus undermines integration efforts. Recent press coverage about calls for *jihad* against the West in this “academy”²⁸ was not enough to close this madrasa. A Saudi is the president of the *Zentralrat der Muslime* which claims – also through lawsuits – to represent Islam in Germany.

At this conjunction it is important to provide some figures and basic information about the Muslim community in Western Europe. As stated earlier, in 1945 there were less than one million Muslims living in Western Europe. In the 1960s workers were requested to come as a labor force – because they were needed. However, the situation since the 1990s has been a different one: The inflow of Muslims to Western Europe is rapidly increasing while European economies are no longer booming. Related to this is the increasing unemployment, thus the diminished need for labor migration. In short: The recent wave of Muslim migration is more related to the worsening economic conditions in Muslim countries than to the need of labor in Europe. In the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean, the population is suffering from poverty and unemployment. Migration to Europe provides hope and a last resort. In this context the figure climbed by the end of 2000 to 15 million Muslim migrants and is increasing (2004: 17 to 18 million). It is worth mentioning that illegal migration is thriving while most of the European economies are characterized by rising unemployment reaching an average level of almost 10 percent. Illegal migration and the abuse of the right to political asylum are the instruments for gaining access to Europe, also for Islamists.²⁹ Among the many obstacles to the Europeanization of Muslim migrants, one finds uncontrolled illegal migration. Integrated Muslim migrants face hardships due to illegal migration and the realization of European Islam is thwarted. What is this Euro-Islam?

From the Clash of Civilizations to European Islam

The debate about Islam, Turkey and Europe is related to the debate on migration and on “Clash of Civilizations” with a focus on Islam. Despite my pointing out cultural differences, I refuse to place my deliberations in the context of ‘a clash.’ In an important Islamic-Western dialogue undertaken in Karachi, debating Muslims and Westerners succeeded in going beyond the fallacies of pretending harmony but refused the term ‘clash.’ Instead they assigned to themselves the task of searching for new modes of peaceful coexistence based on a proper answer to the challenge: “How to deal with differences.”³⁰ On the occasion of that event I had an interview with the prominent Karachi magazine *Newsline* in which I argued: “The clash of civilizations was not invented, but it was used and abused for other reasons.”³¹ Keeping this

²⁸ See *Der Spiegel*, 13 October 2003.

²⁹ See chapter 12 on Islamic fundamentalism in Teitelbaum, Michael S. and Jay Winter (1998). *A Question of Numbers. High Migration, Low Fertility and the Politics of National Identity*. New York: Hill & Wang, pp. 221-239.

³⁰ On this international Western-Islamic Dialogue in Karachi/Pakistan see the coverage by the major Pakistani daily DAWN, in particular the reports: ‘Cross-Culture Talks For Peaceful Co-Existence Urged,’ DAWN, 26 October 1995 and ‘Ways to Avert Clash between Islam and the West Stressed,’ DAWN, 27 October 1995.

³¹ Bassam Tibi interviewed by Ahmed, Tehmina (1995) ‘The Clash of Civilizations Was Not Invented, But It Was Used, Abused for Other Reasons,’ *Newsline* (Karachi), November, pp. 99-100.

concern in mind, I want to go back to the question raised by John Kelsay. He refers to the shift of Islam's importance for the West: from state neighborhood to neighborhood within Western society itself, i.e. from Islam and the West to Islam in the West. In this new situation there is a need to deal with persistent commonalities between both civilizations in a new manner. As John Kelsay puts it:

Perhaps such commonalities serve, in the main, to indicate the nature of disagreement between the West and Islam. ... But there should be no doubt that in certain contexts, the common discourse about ethics ... has the potential for creative and cooperative endeavor. Given the increased presence of Muslims in Europe and North America – a presence that makes for a more than intense interaction between the two traditions than ever before – it is important to see this.³²

Among the premises of this article is my belief that a common discourse about inter-cultural ethics³³ needs to be linked to the debate on the Europeanization of Islam. The outcome could be a civic culture shared by all civilizations. At issue regarding Islam in the West is the question of choice of identity. In general, migrants who want to become citizens are caught between rejection and the pressure to join a cultural ghetto. This is in particular harmful to Muslim juveniles who were born in Europe and are in the process of forming their identity and personality. This debate matters to Europe, Islam and to Turkey as well.

In Germany there are two attitudes representing two extremes toward Muslim migrants: the anti-Islamic and the philo-Islamic one. The German philosopher Helmuth Plessner, who found refuge in the Netherlands during the Nazi period of German history, criticized the propensity of the Germans to shift from one extreme to another, with no middle-way in between. In applying this view to the current state of affairs we see on the one hand, those who demonize Islam while glorifying themselves, and on the other hand, those who are moving from European universalism to cultural relativism with the result of self-denial. An open-minded and prudent German writer related these attitudes to the German debate on Islam and depicted it as 'Enemies and Friends of Islam.'³⁴ Of course, there exists a third group of responsible Europeans who combine cultural open-mindedness with a commitment to the enlightened values of their European civilization. It is, however, unfortunate to see the two extremes at work: Euro-arrogant exclusiveness leading to a clash of civilizations on the one hand and the European attitudes of self-denial being presented in a distorted manner as opening up to other cultures but unwillingly playing into the hands of the Islamists.

Muslims like my humble self who subscribe to the Ibn Khaldunian notion of *asabiyya* – a kind of esprit de corps, or civilization-awareness – believe that the pseudo-opening to others in a form of self-denial is a phenomenon of decline in the West, concealed as open-mindedness. It is a misperception of Europeans that they could earn respect through self-denial. It is exactly the other way around. It is very important that Europeans grasp that a low

³² Kelsay (1993), p. 5.

³³ My concept of international morality (see note 12 above) is based on the premise of an inter-cultural dialogue that deals with differences and addresses them frankly, even blatantly, however with the inclination to find ways for dealing with them on common, i.e. inter-cultural not universalistic grounds. This is also the way in which my friend Abdullahi An-Na'im and I address the need to share human rights concerns, however on grounds of an authentic cultural underpinning in each culture. We relate this concept to an inter-cultural effort of establishing a consensus shared by different cultures. See An-Na'im's and my contributions to the Wilson Center's volume, An-Na'im, Abdullahi and Francis Deng (1990) (eds.) Human Rights in Africa. Cross-Cultural Perspectives. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, pp. 104-132.

³⁴ See the excellent work by Kohlhammer, Siegfried. (1996) Die Feinde und Freunde des Islam. Göttingen: Steidl.

degree of *asabiyya* is not the alternative to Euro-arrogance and racism. In addition, just as philosemitism does not overcome antisemitism, cultural relativist self-denial is only the other side of the coin of Euro-centric exclusiveness.

The choice in a constructed confrontation between “Islam and the West” will be most decisive for the future of both Europe and Islam. The outcome of the cooperation of the parties involved and their ability to dialogue with one another may lead to joint responses to the pending challenges. We have to realize that there exists no constant pattern of Islamic or European identity. Islam will always be an ever-changing cultural system designed by Muslims themselves –similarly Europe can be an open society in which there is a place for Muslims as equal citizens. For the only Muslim country aiming to become European and the community of Muslim migrants in Europe, Euro-Islam is the most promising choice. For determining what variety of “Islam in the West” will prevail in the future Europe, a Euro-Islamic dialogue³⁵ is essential. Migrants could have a multiple, i.e. Euro-Islamic, identity. I support this contention by referring to my case of multiple identities, being both a Middle Eastern Sunni Muslim and a European citizen.

As much as I am concerned about European exclusiveness I am concerned about the maintenance of the Salafi orthodox and Islamist views among the Muslim community in Europe according to which migration is related to the *da'wah*, i.e. the call to Islam, a new neo-absolutist understanding and uncompromising proselytization. According to this understanding, Muslims in Europe consider themselves as outposts for the spread of Islam in Europe. This belief and voicing its rhetoric can only foster anti-Islamic attitudes among Europeans and bolster existing prejudices. Among the exile groups of Muslim extremists in London is one led by Sheikh Omar Bakri called ‘Movement of the Muhajirun.’ This group supported the terrorist attacks on the US-embassies in Africa³⁶ and celebrated the September 11 attacks as “heroic act of Islam.” Bakri clearly links the status of migrants to the doctrine of *hijra* in the pursuit of the *da'wah*/call to Islam. Like his predecessor, the late fundamentalist Kalim Siddiqi, who established the Islamic Counter-Parliament in London, the Syrian preacher Bakri has advanced to be one of the most prominent figures through the British media. After the blast on the US-embassies in Africa and the retaliation by the United States on Sudan and Afghanistan, and foremost after September 11, 2001 Bakri described, Muslims in Europe using the term “we are all Usamah bin Laden” on many BBC TV interviews. Slogans like this prove to be the greatest disservice not only to Islam, but also to all Muslims living in Europe, and to Turkey.

A dialogue is imperative to establish the needed grounds for commonalties. Neither party ought to be burdened by self-righteousness or self-denial. I advocate an honest inter-cultural dialogue in which both sides need to have their own standing, but are inclined to find positive commonalties among themselves supporting the search for the foundations of a civic culture. My objection to multiculturalism is related to the inherent support of this doctrine for cultural ghettos in the name of communitarism and to its negation of shared civic identity patterns.

Part of the needed honesty is to address the disagreements consciously and to develop the ability for dealing with them, not overlooking them. The goal of this combination of realism

³⁵ On this subject see my contribution ‘Kulturarbeit als Dialog zwischen den Kulturen’ in the book published on the 50th anniversary of Goethe Institut Inter Nationes Murnau, Manila, Minsk. 50 Jahre Goethe Institut. (2001) München: C. H. Beck, pp. 25-38.

³⁶ See the report: ‘Islamists protest in London’ (in Arabic), *al-Hayat*, 15 August 1998, p. 5. On the revitalization of the Islamic concept of *hijra* with regard to our present see chapter 6 in Tibi (2002).

and humanism is to attain a commitment to live together in peace, mutual respect and self-respect, without feelings of superiority and without religious or other missionaryism. For us enlightened Muslims it is, for the sake of honesty, imperative that we, while rejecting all kinds of Western missionaryism, not carry it out ourselves. Muslims need to be committed to reason-based dialogue (*dialogische Vernunft/Diskurs-Ethik*), and not confuse dialogue with the *da'wah*/call to Islam, as some fundamentalists in the Muslim diaspora do. Migration must not be viewed as an instrument of Islamization as proselytization. The Qur'an clearly states "*Lakum dinakum wa liya din/You have your religion, I have mine.*" One cannot turn down Western missionaryism and be in favor of one's own missionaryism, if one is honest and committed to a true dialogue and to mutual tolerance. To put my point in plain language: Euro-Islam requires that Muslims in Europe decouple themselves from the Islamic tradition of associating migration with the spread of Islam and also from its abuse by Islamist groups. The dialogue among open-minded Muslims, Christians, and Jews held in Cordoba annually between 1998-2000 was reason-based that facilitated common understanding. The Imam of Jericho, Sheikh Rajai Abdou, who was present at the Cordoba interfaith dialogue said: "I am in conflict with myself. You want to dialogue and you mean by this notion intellectual exchange; to me as a Muslim *hiwar*/dialogue is a means of *da'wah*/call to Islam." We have to be honest and acknowledge that Muslim migrants and Europeans cannot overcome a clash of civilization if this mindset prevails.

Conclusions

Among the findings of my analysis on 'Islam, Turkey and Europe,' is the clear distinction between multiculturalism and cultural pluralism. Equally, I strongly distinguish between political integration and assimilation. In my plea for Euro-Islam, I recommend the political integration of Muslim migrants in the sense of granting them citizenship rights and duties smoothing the way for membership in the 'club' of Europe, as well as demanding from them loyalty to the democratic polity in which they live. The acceptance of secular European laws and constitutions which separate religion from politics is the expression of this loyalty and requires the reconsideration of the Islamic concept of the legitimacy of the Imam³⁷: Cultural reforms would enable a Muslim migrant to live under the governance of a non-Muslim Imam/ruler. But cultural reforms are also needed on the European side. These reforms have to include altering the conditions for accepting Muslims as citizens. In earlier Islamic-European encounters there were not only *jihad* and crusaders, but also cultural borrowing and commonalities on the grounds of human reason.³⁸

Unlike political integration, assimilation is an effort at denying the cultural identity of migrants and thus contradicts cultural pluralism. In Germany I continue to argue in contributions to the media on the example of my personal case that an Arab Muslim migrant can have a triple identity: religio-culturally I am a Euro-Muslim, ethnically I am a Damascene Arab, and politically I am a German citizen. I believe that the combination of these identities is feasible within the framework of cultural pluralism and political integration. This is not merely a personal case, but a sample that fits generalization for other Muslim migrants, including the Turks. As noted earlier, the context of migration is a context of adventures of identity that could lead either to segregation in a gated community or to conceptualizing a

³⁷ See Tibi, Bassam (1996) *Der wahre Imam. Der Islam von Mohammed bis zur Gegenwart*. Munich: Piper Press, 2nd edition 1997.

³⁸ See Watt (1999) and Tibi, Bassam. (1999) *Kreuzzug and Jihad. Der Islam und die christliche Welt*. Munich: Bertelsmann, paperback 2001. [On the cultural borrowing see Lipson, Leslie. \(1993\), p. 62. And on the communality of the primacy of reason and on Islamic rationalism see Davidson, Herbert A. \(1992\) *Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes on Intellect*. New York: Oxford University Press](#)

multiple identity, smoothing the way for a Euro-Islam open to pluralism. Cultural pluralism runs counter to multicultural communitarianism as pursued by Muslim segregationists and European cultural relativists. Segregation leads Muslims to believe they are the “new Jews of Europe.”³⁹ My criticism of multiculturalism stems not only from my commitment to sharing a civic culture, but also from my opposition to rampant universalisms. As a Muslim with a European education, I oppose all varieties of hegemonic Western universalisms and I believe multiculturalism is just another variety of them. I share the view of David Gress in his overall study of Western civilization when he states:

Although multiculturalism might seem to contradict universalism, the two were compatible; indeed, multiculturalism was simply universalism applied to cultural politics ... Universalism ... never solved its fundamental dilemma of being both a Western idea ... and an anti-Western idea.⁴⁰

In my rigorous criticism of advancing cultural relativism to a rampant universalism I also share the view of the late Ernest Gellner regarding his argument:

Three principle options are available in our intellectual climate: religious fundamentalism, relativism, and Enlightenment rationalism ... Logically, the religious fundamentalists are of course also in conflict with the relativists ... In practice, this confrontation is not very much in evidence.⁴¹

Enlightenment rationalism succeeded to build up bridges between Islam and Europe during two basic encounters. The rationalism of medieval Islamic philosophy was the seed of an Islamic Enlightenment that was prevented from unfolding by the Islamic *fiqh*-orthodoxy. It resulted from the Hellenization of Islam. This Hellenization of Islam was the first positive Euro-Islamic encounter. In this context there is a great Turkish authority: al-Farabi,⁴² the Muslim philosopher who saw the perfect state order based on reason not on religion. The impact of Islamic rationalism on the European Renaissance was the second positive one. In contrast, Islamic fundamentalism⁴³ of our age could succeed in materializing the wrongful prophecy of creating a “Clash of Civilizations,” not in bridging them. In the European diaspora, a spread of Islamism would cause Muslim migrants great pains because it would generate anti-Islamism and result in the isolation of Muslim migrants in ghettos, and eventually bring about the unwanted prophecy of a clash of civilizations.

Ethnic identities are exclusive identities. If cultivated in the diaspora they lead to a kind of neo-absolutism and the related social conflicts. An all-inclusive civil-identity based on cultural pluralism is the alternative. In contrast, fundamentalism is a modern variety of neo-absolutism. Pluralism in turn refers to the concept of people representing different views while at the same time being strongly committed to shared cross-cultural rules and, above all, to mutual tolerance and mutual respect. Tolerance can never mean that only one party has the right to maintain its views at the expense of the other. For this reason, I consider the exclusivist bias of multicultural communitarianism as standing in contrast to cultural pluralism and tolerance on which Euro-Islam should be based. One-way-tolerance is the

³⁹ On this issue see Tibi, Bassam. (1996) ‘Foreigners – Today's Jews?’ in Wank, Ulrich (ed.) *The Resurgence of Right Wing Radicalism in Germany*. Atlantic Highlands/NJ: Humanities Press, pp. 85-102.

⁴⁰ Gress, David. (1998) *From Plato to Nato. The Idea of the West and its Opponents*. New York: The Free Press, pp. 503f.

⁴¹ Gellner (1992), pp. 84f.

⁴² See Walzer, Richard. (1985) (ed.) *al-Farabi on the Perfect State*. Oxford: Clarendon.

⁴³ See Tibi, Bassam. (1998) *The Challenge of Fundamentalism. Political Islam and the New World Disorder*. Berkeley: University of California Press

tolerance of the loser. Muslim migrants cannot deny others what they require for themselves. The solution is: to put Islam and Europe in harmony through a Euro-Islam.

The granting of multicultural minority privileges to Muslim migrants in Europe may prove to be a double-edged sword with far-reaching consequences. On the one hand it could facilitate the unwanted interference of Islamic-Mediterranean, mostly undemocratic governments into the affairs of Muslim migrants in Europe. On the other, it could lead to: minorities in Europe being used as the ghetto from which the representatives of political Islam acting in exile operate in an effort to topple existing governments in the World of Islam. The militant Islamists consider democracy as 'kufr/unbelief.'⁴⁴ In contrast, a Euro-Islamic interpretation of Islam is in a position to smooth the way for an Islamic Enlightenment. This rethinking of Islam would be the grounds for introducing "démocratie et démocratisation" into Islam.⁴⁵

Subscribing to the Euro-Islamic view that Muslim migrants should act as a bridge between Islam and Europe I am in opposition to the politics of making Europe a refuge for Islamic fundamentalists, who definitely are not interested in the integration of Muslim migrants. In siding on grounds of cultural pluralism, with the concept of civic culture for all, I am in opposition to the multiculturalists and to their cultural relativism. I argue: The bottom line for a pluricultural, i.e. not a multi-cultural, platform is the unequivocal acceptance of secular democracy, individual human rights of men and women, secular tolerance and civil society. This is an Islamic bridge to Europe presented in this article as Euro-Islam. It is the opposite of Ghetto-Islam or fundamentalist Islam. It is the Muslim migrants in Europe who need to choose, for themselves and for their children, whether to continue to be alien or to join the changed 'club' of Europe, i.e. to be integrated without being assimilated. If the choice is not to integrate it will be extremely difficult to persuade the public opinion in Europe that a Muslim country like Turkey is eligible to join the European community.

One last concluding remark deems important: Due to the great historical burdens and the view of most Europeans that their continent is not designed for migration, the study of Muslim migrants in Europe should not be compared with the same issue in the United States. Migration to Europe is more complicated, because it has a different scope and thus needs more sensitive insights that only people familiar with both worlds, Islam and Europe, can provide. The future of Europe will be determined by the ability of both, Europeans and Muslim migrants, to forge a pattern of European identity⁴⁶ acceptable to both without sacrificing the core values of Europe. A democratic polity for Europe consisting of different religions can only be a secular one. In this regard the French report of December 2003 is right to refuse compromise on *laïcité*. The decision of the French president Jacques Chirac⁴⁷ in the

⁴⁴ I strongly disagree with Esposito, John and John Voll (1996) *Islam and Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press who do not distinguish between Islam and Islamism (see my review in: *Journal of Religion*, 1998/October issue, pp. 667-669. One can cite the Algerian Islamist Ali Ben Haj and many others who truly believe "al-démocratiyya kufr/democracy is heresy". For a reference on this see Aiyashi, Ahmidah (1992) *al-Islamiyun al-jazairiyyun bain al-sulta wa al-rasas* [Algerian Islamists between Rule and Bullets], Algiers: Dar al-Hikmah, pp. 57-60.

⁴⁵ For an interpretation at supporting a democratic view of Islam, see Tibi, Bassam (1995). *Démocratie et Démocratisation en Islam*. La Quête d'un Islam Éclairé et les contre-forces de l'autoritarisme et du fondamentalisme religieux, in *Revue Internationale de Politique Compare*: 2,2 (September 1995), pp. 285-299.

⁴⁶ In the book by the Oxford scholar Siedentrop, Larry (2001) *Democracy in Europe* London: Penguin Books, in the chapter "Europe Christianity and Islam," pp. 189-214 one finds highly pertinent and equally intelligent reasoning on this issue.

⁴⁷ See the report Graham, Robert 'Chirac will Kopftuch an Schulen verbieten,' *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 18 December 2003, 'French Secularism unwraps for more than headscarves,' *Financial Times Deutschland*, 20/21 December 2003, p. 7.

same month to comply with these recommendations and to announce along these lines a specifying code of *laïcité* for September 2004 is a reasoning and decision-making in the right direction. Euro-Muslims side with secular Europe against Islamism, but require from Europe to open itself to a democratic interpretation of Islam based on the separation between religion and politics. This Europeanization is feasible.
