Bulletin of the *Transilvania* University of Braşov
Series IV: Philology and Cultural Studies • Vol. 11 (60) No. 1 – 2018

# Islamophobia & Europhobia: Expanding Rhetorics of Exclusion

Peter O'BRIEN[1]

*This article examines the relationship between Islamophobic and Europhobic rhetorics in Europe. Whereas Islamophobia revolves around the assertion that Islam poses a grave threat to the West, Europhobia asserts the reverse. This article spotlights three examples of Islamophobic othering and Europhobic reverse othering in Europe. European Islamists counter the claim that Islam is incompatible with democracy by contending that European democracy is a hypocritical sham when it comes to equal rights for Muslims. Islamists reverse the claim that Islam is misogynistic by arguing that Europe sexualizes and thereby represses women. Islamists oppose the claim that Islam is inherently expansionist by insisting that Europe continues to harbor (neo)imperialist designs toward the Islamic(ate) World.*

Keywords: *Islamophobia, Europhobia, Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism, Europe*

## 1. Introduction

The rhetoric of exclusion has been expanding in our times. This is especially the case for Islamophobic rhetoric. Islam-bashing ("Muslim ban") figured prominently in Donald Trump's successful bid to win the White House. Likewise, the Leave campaign during the Brexit referendum featured a thinly veiled anti-Islamization theme. On the European Continent, Viktor Orbán resoundingly won a third consecutive term as Hungarian prime minister in April 2018 by, among other things, characterizing refugees as "Muslim invaders" (*POLITICO* 18 January 2018). Radical Right political parties and personalities have been gaining political traction across Europe for the last three decades (Minkenberg, 2017, Akkerman, de Lange and Rooduijn 2016). Indeed, numerous polls reveal that a majority of surveyed persons across Europe oppose Muslim immigration (Bayrakli and Hafez 2017, 6).

Not surprisingly, scholarly analysis of Islamophobic discourse abounds. Inspired and colored by Edward Said's pioneering *Orientalism* (1978), much of this

[1] Professor of Political Science, Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas.

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

otherwise laudable scholarship, particularly the postcolonial variety, suffers from the shortcoming of overdetermining the Muslim subject (Hafez 2014, Fredette 2014, Cesari 2013, Morgan and Poynting 2012, Bowen 2012, Lean 2012; Schneiders 2010). That is, they tend to dismiss (explicitly or implicitly) the agency of Muslims to resist the power of Islamophobic discourse to define and thereby to dominate them: "the agency of the postcolonial is…obliterated in order to inscribe him and her as marginal" (Spivak 1990, 237; also Bhabha 1994, Guha 1982-89, Hall 1980).

Yet, Muslims do resist Islamophobia, and none more vigorously than Islamists. The latter produce and disseminate a steady rhetoric of what I term "Europhobia." Whereas Islamophobia revolves around the assertion that Islam poses a grave threat to the West, Europhobia asserts the reverse. This article spotlights three examples of Islamophobic othering and Europhobic reverse othering in Europe. European Islamists counter the claim that Islam is incompatible with democracy by contending that European democracy is a hypocritical sham when it comes to equal rights for Muslims. Islamists reverse the claim that Islam is misogynistic by arguing that Europe sexualizes and thereby represses women. Islamists oppose the claim that Islam is inherently expansionist by insisting that Europe continues to harbor (neo)imperialist designs toward the Islamic(ate) World. Reverse othering generates and disseminates a significant counter discourse that moves many Muslims in Europe to resist their subjugation in myriad ways.

That said, this article does not mean to suggest symmetry or parity between Islamophobic and Europhobic rhetorics. In Europe to be sure (and likely the world over), Islamophobia has at its disposal far greater resources, distribution and sway. Furthermore, as the article will demonstrate, Europhobic discourse, despite its opposition and resistance, nonetheless is dependent on and shaped by Islamophobia. Following Spivak (1988), I contend that Europhobic reverse othering remains to an important extent informed by or confined within the binary logic of Islamophobia. Reverse othering opens only very specific and limited iterations of resistance while obscuring other arguably more useful challenges to Islamophobic stereotypes that emanate from what Bhabha (1994, 37-38) has called the hybrid "third space of enunciation."

## 2. Methodology

I focus on the three themes because they are the most salient. The claim that Islam and by extension Muslims are anti-democratic is commonly heard on both the political Right and Left. Moreover, its broad distribution has influenced the proliferation across Europe of mandatory integration tests, civics courses and

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

loyalty oaths targeted specifically at European Muslims (Goodman 2014, 214-20; Groot, Kuipers and Weber 2009), not to mention calls for mass deportation. The veil controversy has been in the headlines regularly since 1989 when three pupils of Moroccan heritage who refused to unveil were expelled by administrators of Gabriel Havez Secondary School. Burqa, niqab or hijab bans have been enacted in countries such as France, Belgium, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Latvia, Bulgaria, Kosovo and Turkey (Korteweg and Yurdakul 2014, Rosenberger and Sauer 2012, O'Brien 2016, 104–43). The salience of Islamic expansionism manifests itself in the enormous amount of both rhetoric and policymaking addressing alleged Islamist terrorism. In 2016, for example, whereas Jihadists were linked to thirteen of the 142 failed, foiled, or completed terrorist attacks recorded in Europe, Muslim suspects accounted for 718 of the 1,002 arrests made by authorities in conjunction with counterterrorism (Europol 2017, 10).

By "Islamophobes," I mean public opinion leaders (politicians, activists, journalists, scholars) who are keen to make and distribute critical assessments of Islam. However, to qualify as "Islamophobic" (in this analysis), their allegations need to be reductionist and essentializing. They have to claim implicitly or explicitly that whatever negative trait they criticize (for example, tyranny, misogyny) is inherent to Islam and can therefore justifiably be suspected of most or all devout Muslims. Furthermore, in this article, Islamophobes, for the most part, are not degree-holding specialists on Islam and would appear to be uninterested in learning from the abundant literature now available that plainly refutes reductionist allegations regarding Islam and Muslims (see O'Brien 2015, Schneiders 2010).

I focus on Europhobic pronouncements from Islamists because I am interested in their resistance to the dominant discourse. I employ the admittedly imperfect term "Islamism" loosely and broadly to envelop the beliefs of all those who strive toward a society in which Islamic precepts and laws -- typically understood as those enunciated in the Qur'an and Sunna – predominate. Among those I label "Islamists" the general idea tends to prevail that God revealed through the Prophet Muhammad (and by some accounts certain subsequent Hadiths as well) sufficient guidelines for leading a morally upstanding life as an individual and as a community in all times and places. They view and practice "Islam as a way of life" rather than a private confession (Maréchal 2008, 204-07). Due to limited space, I gloss over the significant differences in strategy for achieving the Islamist goal -- differences ranging from pietist personal conversion to non-violent political action to jihadist militancy. The connections among Islamist organizations are typically informal and often strained. Yet, they all tend to see themselves working in the service of the international *umma* (Pargeter 2008, 65). But let the reader be

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

forewarned that Islamist (not to mention Islamic) doctrine and practice are highly complex and evolving phenomena full treatment of which would demand a separate volume (Mandaville 2014, Leiken 2012, Göle 2011, Roy 2005).

## 3. Tyranny

One of the commonest Islamophobic tropes maintains that Islam (and by extension devout Muslims) is undemocratic. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, for example, avers that all who take Muhammad as their moral guide to action are bound to reject democracy. She has assailed the Prophet as a "perverted tyrant whose teachings cannot be reconciled with democracy." Listed by *Time* (18 April 2005) as one of the "100 most influential persons in the world," Hirsi Ali has been but one of a chorus of prominent opinion leaders, including Afshin Elian, Chadortt Djavann, André Glucksmann, Emmanuell Todd, Oriana Fallaci, Necla Kelek, Alice Schwarzer, Helmut Schmidt, Ralph Giordano, Melanie Phillips, Roy Jenkins, and Niall Ferguson, who insist that Islam is incompatible with democracy. Hirsi Ali's erstwhile political partner in the Dutch parliament, Geert Wilders, went so far as to liken the Qur'an to *Mein Kampf*. Prominent French intellectual Bernhard Henri Lévy uses the catachresis "fascislamist," while *Le Figaro* columnist Yvan Rioufol prefers "nazislamist" (both quoted in Rigoni 2007, 109-110). British columnist Christopher Hitchins spoke of "fascism with an Islamic face" (*Slate* 22 October 2007), and the bestselling Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci of "the new Nazi-Fascism" (quoted in *New Yorker* 5 June 2006).

The incompatibility indictment, versions of which frequently appear on any number of Islamophobic websites such as *Islam Watch*, *Politically Incorrect*, *Die Grüne Pest*, *Nürnberg 2.0*, *Racisme anti-blanc*, *Reposte Laique*, *Stop the Islamization of Europe*, *Nuke all Mosques*, *Islam versus Europe, Pro-Reconquista-Europa*, *The Brussels Journal*, *Jihad Watch*, or *Gates of Vienna,* typically asserts something like the following from *España 2000*:

> [Muslims] have not integrated because if one obeys the will of God, one cannot obey the will of the people or respect the principle of legitimacy of democracy. Moreover, Islam is a theocratic system whose members are obligated to fulfill the will of Allah as interpreted by their clerics (alertadigital.com 13 January 2016; accessed 13 October 2017)

After all, "Islam" in Arabic means "submission," as the 2004 film *Submission* written by Hirsi Ali and directed by Theo Van Gogh emphasizes. The creed's insistence on submission is said to foster a "slave mentality" (Kelek 2005, 47) among Muslims

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

that makes them dubious if not inimical toward individual liberty, the moral cornerstone of democracy. German sociologist of Turkish background and winner of Bavaria's prestigious Geschwister-Scholl prize for courage in the name of liberty, Necla Kelek (2005, 223), asks doubtingly: "Is a culture capable of democracy that denies to the individual the right of self-determination?" Similarly, Giordano "doubts whether anyone who considers holy this charter of a herdmen's culture can abide by the [German] constitution" (quoted in Bahners 2011, 238).

Islamist Europhobes reverse this argument by asserting that the European "democracies" are themselves anti-democratic, at least when it comes to Muslims. For example, Abou Jahjah, leader of the Antwerp-based Arab-European League, complains: "We're Belgian citizens but they treat us like foreigners. The whole system is rigged to exclude us from jobs, houses and everything" (*The Telegraph* 29 November 2002). Similarly, *Al-Islam*, the journal of the Munich Islamic Center, charges: "in a society where the majority of the population – and nearly all politicians – are critical of or reject Islam, one cannot expect Muslims to enjoy real freedom" (quoted in Meining 2012, 228). The Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüş "reminds that the majority of Muslims in Europe are excluded from direct democratic participation" and presents itself as "supporting the socially disadvantaged and oppressed" (www.igmg.de/gemeinschaft/wir-ueber-uns; accessed 17 January 2015). Abdul Wahid, Chairman of *Hizb ut-Tahrir* Britain, claims that "the government's long-term objective is to manufacture a compliant, subdued, secular Muslim community in Britain" (quoted in Akbarzadeh and Roose 2011, 314).

Despite pretensions of liberty, equality and tolerance in Western democracies the truth, according to Islamists, is that Muslims and the values dear to them are under relentless attack. Kalim Siddiqui, who founded the Muslim Parliament UK in 1989, charged that "post-Christian secular society," including "the British Government," seeks "to destroy our values" (quoted in Kepel 1997: 143). Jahjah talks of "Flemish cultural terrorism" against the Islamic community of Belgium (*The Telegraph* 29 November 2002). Similarly, before being deported from Germany to Turkey in 2004, Metin Kaplan, the self-proclaimed Caliph of Cologne, complained that "the enemies of Islam assume they can attack our religion, beliefs, and worship and we Muslims keep silent like sheep" (quoted in Yükleyen 2012: 239). In response to France's 2004 ban on veiling in public schools, Abdullah Ben Masour, General Secretary of the Union of Islamic Organizations in France (UOIF), criticized the French state for portraying "a twelve-year-old child…like an enemy…just because she wants to do her own thing" (quoted in Koopmans *et al*. 2005: 170). This complaint of the constant and systematic oppression of European Muslims has for at least two decades represented a major theme in the lyrics of

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

hugely popular Islamist hip-hop and rap artists such as IAM (Imperial Asiatic Men), Islamic Force, Lala Man, 3ème CEil, Fun-Da-Mental, Mecca2Medina, Pearls of Islam or Yazid. The latter sings:

> I'm the Arab, stopping oppression is my mission.
> The country of secularism doesn't tolerate Islam
> Unemployment ravages, they talk of immigration
> And when the *banlieue* burns, they talk of integration.
> (quoted in Jenkins 2007, 172; also see Aidi 2014)

**4. Misogyny**

One of the Islam-bashers' favorite accusations against Islam and Muslims is that they are misogynistic. Muhammad is said to have set the example with his consummated marriage to nine-year-old Aisha. On the internet one can frequently come across such slurs as "Muhammad the Pedophile" (wikiislam.net), "rapist" (western-civilization.com), and "child-fucker" (*Kinderficker*) (pi-news.net). The critics conveniently neglect to mention that consummated marriages with girls at puberty have been a common practice in many cultures, including Christian ones. Select verses are typically plucked from the Qur'an and quoted out of context to demonstrate Islam's supposed disdain for women:

> The Quran in Sura 4:11 says: "The share of a male shall be twice that of a female"… The Quran in Sura 4:34 says: "If you fear highhandedness from your wives, remind them [of the teaching of God], then ignore them when you go to bed, then hit them…" (infidelsarecool.com)

Again, rather than acknowledge that misogynistic lines also abound in the Bible (for instance, Genesis, 3:16), opportunistic Islamophobes proffer the essentialist argument that the Prophet's words and deeds have fostered an Islamic doctrine and culture that make all pious Muslims prone to oppress women. French feminist Elisabeth Altschull (1995, 200) does concede that "all religions have their oppressive aspects toward women," but immediately adds that "none [but Islam] has gone so far, is as systematic, or is as explicit about the inferior status of women willed and created by god." Kelek (2007, 114), the author of the 2005 bestseller *Die fremde Braut* (*The Foreign Bride)*, alleges that "political Islam wants…to establish an Apartheid of the sexes in free European societies," whereby "women in public don't have the right to be human" (quoted in Cesari 2013, 9). In her book *The Caged Virgin*, Hirsi Ali (2006, xi) excoriates Islam for endorsing "a stifling morality

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

that makes Muslim men the owners of women." The most pessimistic of these caricatures depict Muslim women so firmly oppressed by and socialized to gender inequality that even they cannot be relied on to fight for emancipation, unless, that is, they abandon Islam altogether. Thus, Hirsi Ali (2006, 31-32) avers:

> because they have internalized their subordination, they no longer experience it as an oppression by an external force but as a strong internal shield… They are like prisoners suffering from Stockholm syndrome, in which hostages fall in love with the hostage takers and establish a deep intimate contact with them.

It speaks to the widespread influence of this trope that the Stasi Commission (tasked with recommending whether to ban veiling in French public schools in 2004) refused to hear public testimony from veiled women on grounds that their views could not possibly be autonomous.

Islamophobic scorn has been directed beyond veiling to other issues affecting female Muslims. So-called "honor killings" of Muslim women who have allegedly disgraced their family by consorting with non-Muslims have received much sensationalized media coverage and political commentary (Korteweg and Yurdakul 2013; Fredette 2014: 132). In the case of Hatan Sürücü, who was slain by her brother in Berlin in 2005, experts on gender and Islam published an open letter criticizing Islam critics Serap Çileli, Seyran Ateş and Necla Kelek for deliberately exaggerating and exploiting the tragedy in an effort to advance their personal Islamophobic agendas (Terkessidis and Karakaşoğlu 2006). The film *La Squale* (2000) and the book *Dans l'enfer des tournantes* (translated into English as *To Hell and Back*) by Samira Bellil (2002) focused French national attention on the arresting problem of gang-rape among Muslims in the *banlieues*, when, in fact, the despicable act transpires in non-Muslim circles as well (Muchielli 2005). *Burned Alive*, the 2005 best-selling French memoir of a woman who survived being doused with gasoline and set ablaze by her brother, appears to have been largely fabricated with the assistance of writer and promoter Marie-Thérèse Cuny, who "assisted" at least two other women in similar fashion (Abu-Lughod 2013, 124). So-called "forced marriages" have also become media flashpoints through popular books such as *Brick Lane* (Ali 2004), *Die Fremde Braut* (Kelek 2005) and *The Caged Virgin* (Hirsi Ali 2006) or films like *Die Fremde* (2010) by Feo Aladag, *Kuma* (2012) by Umut Dağ and *Lal Gece* (2012) by Reis Çelik, which depict real or fictional accounts of young women dragooned into marrying men whom they despise. In reality, however, the overwhelming majority of arranged marriages result from negotiations freely entered into by the bride and groom with their parents (Roy 2007, 89).

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

Islamists reverse the image of subjugated female Muslims by spotlighting the purportedly rampant objectification and sexualization of women in Europe. An editorial published by Turkey's leading Islamist newspaper, *Yeni Akit* (March 2016), complains that Western secularists and their imitators in Turkey

> do not like covered women; they want them naked. They do not like women at home; they want women on top of a car with bikinis. They do not like studying women; they want women at expensive late-night parties. They do not like mothers; they want mistresses.

It should come as no surprise, according to the Union for Islamic Development and Culture in Bulgaria, that "women can be seen in the streets dressed in clothes that barely cover their underwear (and this is taken as normal)… [trying] to appear as sexually attractive as possible…and disappointed if no one turns their head to look at them" (quoted in Ghodsee 2012, 119). *Al-Muhajiroun* claims that in British secular schools "children are taught to conform to a code of dress that shows their nakedness… Children grow up idolizing pop-stars and footballers rather than appreciating the Messengers from their creator and worshiping God alone" (quoted in Wiktorowicz 2005, 169).

The preoccupation with women and girls as sex objects is typically made to mushroom into myriad additional problems that are said to plague Western women's lives. In her study of the Swedish journal *Salaam*, for instance, Otterbeck (2000, 259) found that

> Swedish (or Western) women is a recurrent theme. The Swedish woman…is described as a victim of several powers. She is exploited by commercialism, especially by the fashion industry. She is overworked and underpaid, has a full-time job and all the housework. She never has time for her children who will end up on the streets which will lead them to self-destruction, drugs, crimes and a high suicide rate. Her marriage will eventually break down and lead to divorce due to unrealistic hopes built on the first moments of love and passion in the relationship.

Just as the image of subjugated female Muslims self-servingly implies that European women are liberated, the portrayal of the latter as sinfully unchaste and wantonly over-sexed is coded to suggest superior virtue among pious Muslims. Veiling, for example, is exalted as a necessary safeguard against wayward Westernization. Fereshta Ludin, the woman at the center of Germany's headscarf controversy, insisted that her veil ensured "protection against Western decadence" (quoted in Oestreich 2004, 116). Muslims are warned that removing the veil in

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

public represents the first capricious step down a treacherous path ineluctably leading to mundane profanity and eternal damnation. Thus, German Salafist Ibrahim Abou-Nagie warns that unveiled women will land in hell (www.diewahrereligion.de). One internet meme that has found wide distribution depicts a veiled woman ascending a staircase to heaven, the unveiled, secularly clad woman descending a staircase into hell. Unveiling is further said to invite harassment from lascivious Western men, which will either lead to rape or, worse, consorting and fornicating with them which, in turn, will alienate the impious women from their true family and community. Typically, verses from the Qur'an will be cited to emphasize divine injunction: "O Prophet! Tell thy wives and daughters, and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments over their persons (when outside): that they should be known (as such) and not molested" (Qur'an 33:59). Such purported Qur'anic approbation is reinforced by an abundance of popular, alarmist film and fiction widely distributed among Muslim immigrants that dramatize stories of unsuspecting Muslim daughters and wives lured from chastity and piety into depravity and ruin by mischievous European playboys (Gerlach 2006: 58-59).

## 5. Empire

Islamophobes warn that Islam is inherently expansionist. Muhammad is blamed for having cast the mold by establishing an army of holy warriors in Medina that went on to wage *jihad* against the infidels controlling Mecca. On the website islamwatch.org, for instance, Hirsi Ali alleged:

> Muhammad built the House of Islam using military tactics that included mass killing, torture, targeted assassination, lying and the indiscriminate destruction of productive goods…a close look at the propaganda produced by the terrorists [of today] reveals constant quotation of Muhammad's deeds and edicts to justify their actions and to call on other Muslims to support their cause. (Hirsi Ali 2006)

Of course, such expansionist militancy was attributed to the prophet not only in the controversial cartoon published by *Jylland-Postens* in 2005, but also in the notorious Regensburg speech of 2006, in which Pope Benedict XVI (2006 referred to Muhammad's "command to spread by sword the faith he preached."

Many maintain that the Muslims want to conquer Europe. Such charges often point to verses in the Qur'an that purportedly command believers to exercise violence. Favorites (often taken out of context) read: "when you encounter the

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

unbelievers strike off their heads" (47, 4); or "slay them wherever ye find them and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out" (2, 191-93). It should come as no great surprise, then, claims Niall Ferguson that "a youthful Muslim society to the south and east of the Mediterranean is poised to colonize – the term is not too strong – a senescent Europe" (quoted in Saunders 2012, 55). "Wake up, people," thundered Fallaci following 9/11, "what is under way here is a reverse crusade…" (quoted in Kaya 2012, 6-7). Søren Krarup warns of "the slow extermination of the Danish people" (quoted in Hedetoft 2003), while Melanie Phillips (2007: 66) contends that "the job of subjugating the West is half done" and is being carried out by a "lethal and many-headed hydra" (11) of Al-Qaeda affiliates in Europe. Alice Schwarzer (2002), whose 2002 bestseller was titled *The Holy Warriors and the Misguided Tolerance*, drew the predictable comparison to the Nazis: "The parallels to 1933 are emerging...The holy warriors have already made Italy their logistical basis, England their propoganda center and Germany their European hub." Sorbonne history professor Guy Millière (2004) went so far as to claim that the Muslim question "will determine whether France survives or perishes" in the twenty-first century. There would appear to be no limit to the number of politicians, from Enoch Powell to Jean-Marie Le Pen to Jörg Haider, to Pim Fortuyn, Geert Wilders, Alice Weidel, Marine Le Pen, Viktor Orbán, Filip Dewinter, Siv Jensen and Nigel Farage, who catapult themselves to political popularity by haranguing against the "Islamization" of Europe. Orbán, for example, has credited himself and Hungary with having "prevented the Islamic world from flooding us from the South" (*The Guardian* 18 February 2018). Large numbers of writers have sprung onto bestseller lists with books purporting to expose the designs of radical Muslim cells to transform Europe into "Eurabia" (Y'oer 2005, also Marchand 2013, Ulfkotte 2013, Broder 2006, Besson 2005). Publishers seem unable to resist the accusation. The popular Romanian newspaper, *Adevărul* (23 March 2016), featured an interview with former President Traian Băsescu, who warned of "an invasion of Europe" by Syrian refugees (quoted in Pop 2016, 41). The cover of the Polish weekly *wSeici* went viral in February 2016 with a particularly offensive combination of the misogyny and expansionism tropes that depicted a half-naked woman clothed by the EU flag defending herself against groping hands of dark complexion. The caption read "Islamic rape of Europe." With similar graphic acumen, Islamophobic websites abound that deploy arresting graphs and images depicting the impending Islamization of Europe. One YouTube video with over 1 million hits features a reconfigured map of "Europe 2015" on which France has been renamed "The Islamic Republic of New Algeria," The United Kingdom "North Pakistan," Germany "New Turkey," and so on (youtube.com/ watch?v= wiLdDe7Eha4; accessed 12 July 2012). A *Pro-Reconquista-Europa* headline from 22

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

July 2014 read: "Madrid to Fall [to jihadists] in 2020" (forum.pro-reconquista-europa.com/viewtopic.php?f=93&t=2267); the headline at *Stop the Islamization of Europe* from 17 April 2015 was: "Under attack by Muslim Extremists – the invasion has begun." Given the nigh ubiquity of anti-Islam hyperbole, it should come as no surprise that more than two-thirds of those polled in France, Britain, the US and Germany "are worried about Islamic extremists in their country" (Pew 2012).

Eurohostile Islamists retort that it is Europe (the West) that is imperialist. Islamists contend that since the Crusades Europe and the West have harbored and realized (neo)imperialist designs on the Orient. Regularly invoking conspiracy theory, self-appointed "cyber-imams" point the finger at the USA, Israel and their allies in Europe as today's "Crusaders and Zionists" (quoted in Scientific Council, 2006, 199; also Kepel 2004, 289; Wiktorowicz 2005, 68; and Leiken 2012, 232). Although Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain condemned the Boston Marathon bombing of 2013, it urged visitors to its website to consider the larger context:

> Just in the past decade, in a highly charged post 9-11 world, the USA and its allies have committed numerous heinous crimes against Muslims. Whether one looks at the Guantanamo Bay, the deaths of Iraqis on false pretences (*sic*), the systematic destruction of Afghanistan since 2002, the drone attacks in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia, the attack and intervention in Mali, overt support for Israel's crimes in Palestine, tacit support for India's crimes in Kashmir, silence and complicity over Russian thuggery in the North Caucasus, the backing of vicious dictators in the Muslim world or the tacit support for Bashar Al-Assad in Syria until recently, one will see genuine causes for grief, anger and emotion …(www.hizb.org.uk/current-affiars/boston-bombings).

ISIS has successfully recruited thousands of European Muslims to join its ranks with contentions such as: "Oh Americans, and oh Europeans, the Islamic State did not initiate a war against you as your governments and media try to make you believe. It is you who started the transgression against us, and thus you deserve blame and you will pay a great price" (*CNN* 22 September 2014). Islamist social media tend to portray Western foreign policy as nothing short of a thinly veiled crusade bent on destroying Islam. Typically, physical injuries to innocent women and children allegedly inflicted by Western government action are highlighted and depicted not as unintended and regretted but rather deliberate and wanton (Leiken 2012, 232; Pargeter 2008, 198; Wiktorowicz 2005, 68; Kepel 2004, 289). By contrast, jihadists are one-dimensionally lionized as heroic defenders of Islam miraculously overcoming tremendous odds to triumph over the Western persecutors (Awan 2007, 221-22; Sageman 2008, 113-115). As with their Islamophobic counterparts,

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

these Europhobic accusations contain no nuance; *all* Western government actions are designed to oppress *all* Muslims; *all* (non-Muslim) Westerners support such action.

Sadly, such fulminations can and do influence European Muslims. For example, Mohammed Bouyeri, murderer of Theo van Gogh and member of the so-called "Hofstad Network" of alleged terrorists, claimed:

> There are dark Satanic forces that have sown their seed of evil everywhere in the world. This seed has been sown in the Islamic world in the times of colonialism…Since the fall of the Ottoman Empire…the enemies of Islam have been active in gradually carrying out their plans aiming at the total destruction of Islam. (Quoted in Peters 2011, 153)

Omar Bakri, who headed the British group *Al-Muhajiroun*, said in 2004 that aggressive Western foreign policy had earned Western nations "a 9/11 day after day after day" (quoted in Aidi 2014, 65). London Tube bomber Shehzad Tanweer justified his actions thusly: "Your government continues to oppress our women and children, our brothers and sisters in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq and Chechnya" (youtube.com/watch?v=FG6a26uX1eA). Likewise, Michael Adebolajo, who cut down British soldier Lee Rigby with a machete in 2013, claimed: "Muslims are dying daily by British soldiers…We swear by Allah…we will never stop fighting you until you leave us alone" (youtube.com/watch?v=WxrtaHkyw5w). Amedy Coulibaly, who killed four hostages in Paris in 2015, complained of the wrongful persecution of ISIS: "They need to stop bombing ISIS" (*CNN* 11 January 2015).

## 6. Conclusion

In her widely read article "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Spivak (1988) cast doubt on identifying and hearing an authentic subaltern voice completely free of the influence of the dominant Eurocentric discourse. The rhetoric of Europhobia is counter-hegemonic to be sure, but it remains informed by Islamophobia. Reverse othering locks Islamist discourse into the binary logic of Islamophobia that juxtaposes Islam and Europe as utterly different (or other) and irrevocably at odds. Europhobia portrays Europe (the West) as wholly evil as well as incapable of reform. The binary logic plainly manifests itself in the notion of "Westoxification," originally coined by the Iranian intellectual Jalal al-e Ahmad but widely circulated by and among European Islamists. Any and all contact with Europeans is discouraged, lest the pious Muslim become infected with their evil thoughts and deeds.

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

Binary logic impedes the emergence of hybrid voices from Bhabha's (1994) "third space." Thankfully, such voices do exist. They can be heard, for example, from what some scholars label "post-Islamists" (Mandaville 2014, Schiffauer 2010, Roy 1998). I adopt the admittedly less-than-perfect label to refer to a new generation of Muslim intellectuals and activists in search of a "fusion of religiosity and rights, faith and freedom, Islam and liberty [that] transcend[s] Islamism by building a pious society with a civil nonreligious state" (Bayat 2013). While their critique of many aspects of modern Western societies is unmistakably informed by the thought of earlier Islamists such as Sayyid Qutb or Abul Ala Maududi, post-Islamists eschew the wholesale rejection of Western society associated with both the Islamist pioneers as well as their contemporary orthodox adherents. "I don't deny my Muslim roots," claims Tariq Ramadan, "but I don't vilify Europe either" (*Time* 11 December 2000). Though the grandson of Muslim Brotherhood founder Hasan al Banna, Ramadan (2010, 257) chides European Muslims for falling prey to "simplistic versions of 'us versus them'" whereby "you are more Muslim when you are against the West." Ramadan's celebrity notwithstanding, post-Islamist voices, like the ecumenically oriented voices of some non-Muslim Europeans who resist a wholesale rejection of Islam and even Islamism (Schiffauer 2010, Roy 2005), continue to go largely unheard drowned out by the din of nigh ubiquitous Islamophobic and Europhobic demagoguery.

**References**

Abu-Lughod, Lila. 2013. *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ahadi, Mina and Vogt, Sina (2008). *Ich habe abgeschworen. Warum ich für die Freiheit und gegen den Islam kämpfe*. Munich: Heyne.

Aidi, Hisham D. (2014). *Rebel Music: Race, Empire and the New Muslim Youth Culture*. New York: Vintage Books.

Akbarzadeh, Shahram and Roose, Joshua M. 2011. "Muslims, Multiculturalism and the Question of the Silent Majority." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 31(3): 309-25.

Akkerman, Tijtske, Sarah L. de Lange, and Matthijs Rooduijn (eds.). 2016. *Radical Right-Wing Populist Parties in Western Europe: Into the Mainstream?* New York: Routledge.

Ali, Monica. 2004. *Brick Lane*. New York: Scribner.

Altschull, Elisabeth. 1995. *Le voile contre l'école*. Paris: Le Seuil.

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

Antwerp, Ambrose Evans-Pritchard in. "Arab Racist Sparked Riot in Antwerp, Say Belgians." *The Telegraph*. Telegraph Media Group, 29 Nov. 2002.

Bahners, Patrick. 2011. *Die Panikmacher: Die deutsche Angst vor dem Islam. Eine Streitschrift*. Munich: Beck.

Bayat, Asef. 2013. "Preface." In *Post-Islamism: The Changing Faces of Political Islam*, ed. by Asef Bayat. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bayrakli, Enes and Farid Hafez (eds.). 2017. *Islamophobia European Report 2016*. Istanbul: SETA.

Bellil, Samira. 2002. *Dans l'enfer des tournantes*. Paris: Denoël.

Besson, Sylvain. 2005. *La conquête de l'Occident: Le project secret des islamistes*. Paris: Le Seuil.

Bhabha, Homi. 1994. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge.

Bowen, John R. 2012. *Blaming Islam*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Broder, Henryk. 2006. *Hurra, wir kapitulieren: Von der Lust am Einknicken*. Berlin: Verlag Wolf Jobst Siedler Jr.

Cesari, Jocelyn 2013. *Why the West Fears Islam: An Exploration of Muslims in Liberal Democracies*. New York: Palgrave.

Europol 2017. *European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2016 (TE-SAT 2013)*. Brussels: European Police Office.

Fallaci, Oriana. 2006. "The New Nazi-Fascism." *The New Yorker*. New Yorker Inc., 5.

Fredette, Jennifer 2014. *Constructing Muslims in France: Discourse, Public Identity, and the Politics of Citizenship*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Gerlach, Julia. 2006. *Zwischen Pop und Dschihad: Muslimische Jugend in Deutschland*. Berlin: Christoph Links Verlag.

Ghodsee, Kristen 2012. "Regulating Religious Symbols in Public Schools: the Legal Status of the Islamic Headscarf in Bulgaria." In *Politics, Religion and Gender: Framing and Regulating the Veil*, ed. by Sieglinde Rosenberger and Birgit Sauer, 116-31. London: Routledge.

Göle, Nilüfer. 2004. "Die sichtbare Präzens des Islam und die Grenzen der Öffentlichkeit." In *Islam in Sicht: Der Auftritt von Muslimen im öffentlichen Raum*, ed. by Nilüfer Göle and Ludwig Ammann, 11-44. Bielefeld: transcript.

Göle, Nilüfer. 2011. *Islam in Europe: The Lure of Fundamentalism and the Allure of Cosmopolitanism*. Trans.Steven Rendall. Princeton: Marcus Wiener.

Goodman, Sara Wallace. 2014. *Immigration and Membership: Politics in Western Europe.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Groot, Gerard-René de, Jan-Jaap Kuipers, and Franziska Weber. 2009. "Passing Citizenship Tests as a Requirement for Naturalization: A Comparative Perspective." In *Illiberal Liberal States: Immigration, Citizenship and*

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

*Integration in the EU*, ed. by Elspeth Guild, Kees Groenendijk, and Sergio Carrera, 51-78. Burlington: Ashgate.

Guha, Ranajit 1982-89. *Subaltern Studies*. 6 Vols. New Dehli: Oxford University Press.

Hafez, Farid (ed.) 2014. *Jahrbuch für Islamophobieforschung 2014*. Vienna: New Academic Press.

Hall, Stuart. 1980. "Cultural Studies: Two Paradigms." *Media, Culture and Society* 2(1): 57-72.

Hedetoft, Ulf. 2003. "Cultural Transformation': How Denmark Faces Immigration." *Open Democracy* 30 October. http://www.opendemocracy.net/people-migrationeurope/article_1563.jsp

Hirsi Ali, Ayaan. 2006. "There Is an Alternative to Islam's Example." 1 July www.islamwatch.org/ExMuslims/AHirsi/Alternative2Islam.htm.

Hitchens, Christopher. "Defending the Term "Islamofascism."" *Slate*. Slate, 22 Oct. 2007.

Jenkins, Philip. 2007. *God's Continent: Christianity, Islam, and Europe's Religious Crisis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kaya, Ayhan. 2012. *Islam, Migration and Integration: The Age of Securitisation*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Kelek, Necla 2005. *Die fremde Braut: Ein Bericht aus dem Innern des türkischen Lebens in Deutschland.* Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch.

Kelek, Necla. 2007. "Die Stereotype des Mr. Buruma." In *Islam in Europa: Eine Internationale Debatte*, ed. by Thierry Chervel and Anja Seeliger, 110-16. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

Kepel, Giles 1997. *Allah in the West: Islamic Movements in America and Europe*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Kepel, Giles. 2004. *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Koopmans, Ruud, Paul Statham, Marco Guigni, Florence Passy. 2005. *Contested Citizenship: Immigration and Cultural Diversity in Europe.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

*The Koran* 2003. Trans. N.J. Dawood. London: Penguin.

Korteweg, Anna C., and Gökçe Yurdakul. 2013. "Gender Equality and Immigrant Immigration: Honor Killing and Forced Marriage Debates in the Netherlands, Germany, and Britain." *Women's Studies International Forum* 41: 204-14.

Korteweg, Anna C., and Gökçe Yurdakul. 2014. *The Headscarf Debates: Conflicts of National Belonging*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Lean, Nathan. 2012. *The Islamophobia Industry: How the Right Manufactures Fear of Muslims*. London: Pluto Press.

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

Leiken, Robert S. 2012. *Europe's Angry Muslims: The Revolt of the Second Generation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mandaville, Peter. 2014. *Global Political Islam*. London: Routledge.

Marchand, René. 2013. *Reconquista ou mort de l'Europe: L'enjou de la guerre islamique*. Paris: Editions Riposte Laïque.

Maréchal, Brigitte. 2008. *The Muslim Brothers in Europe: Roots and Discourse*. Leiden: Brill.

Meining, Stefan. 2012. "The Islamic Community in Germany: an Organization under Observation." In Roel Meijer & Edwin Bakker (eds.). *The Muslim Brotherhood in Europe*. Pp. 209-33. New York: Columbia University Press.

Millière, Gut. 2004. *Qui a peur de l'islam!: La dèmocratie est-elle soluble dans l'islam?* Paris: Editions Michalon.

Minkenberg, Michael. 2017. *The Radical Right in Eastern Europe: Democracy under Seige?* New York: Palgrave.

Morgan, George and Poynting, Scott (eds.). 2012. *Global Islamophobia: Muslims and Moral Panic in the West*. Burlington: Ashgate.

Muchielli, Laurent. 2005. *Scandale des "tournantes."* Paris: La Découverte.

O'Brien, Peter. 2015. "Postmodern Politics: Manipulating Images of Islam in Contemporary Europe." In Ruqayya J. Khan (ed.). *Muhammad in the Digital Age*. Pp. 83-105. Austin: University of Texas Press.

O'Brien, Peter. 2016. *The Muslim Question in Europe: Political Controversies and Public Philosophies*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Otterbeck, Jonas. 2000. "Local Islamic Universalism: Analyses of an Islamic Journal in Sweden." In *Paroles d'Islam: Individus, sociétés et discours dans l'Islam européen contemporain*, edité par Felice Dassetto, 247-66. Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose.

Pargeter, Alison 2008. *The New Frontier of Jihad: Radical Islam in Europe*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Pop, Doru. 2016. "Misrepresentation of Muslims and Islamophobic Public Discourses in Recent Romanian Media Narratives." *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 15/4: 33–51.

Peters, Rudolph. 2011. "Dutch Extremist Islamism: Van Gogh's Murderer and his Ideas." In *Jihadi Terrorism and the Radicalisation Challenge*, ed. by Rik Coolsaet, 145-60. Farnham: Ashgate.

Pew 2012. "Muslim-Western Tensions Persist." July 21. http://pewresearch.org/pubs/2066/muslims-westerners-christians-jews-islamic-extremism-september-11. Accessed 22 July 2012.

Phillips, Melanie. 2007. *Londonistan*. New York: Encounter Books.

BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)

Pope Benedict XVI. 2006. “Faith, Reason and the University: Reflections and Memories.” 12 September. Regensburg. Available at www.vatican.va/holy father/benedict xvi/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf ben-xvi spe 20060912 university-regensburg en.html.

Ramadan, Tariq. 2010. “Islam and Muslims in Europe: Change and Challenges.” In *Political Islam: Context versus Ideology*, ed. by Khaled Hroub, 253-64. London: SAQI.

Rigoni, Isabelle. 2007. “Access to Media for European Muslims” in Samir Amghar et. al., *European Islam: Challenges for Public Policy and Society*, 107-124. Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies.

Rosenberger, Sieglinde, and Birgit Sauer (eds.). 2012. *Politics, Religion and Gender: Framing and Regulating the Veil*. London: Routledge.

Roy, Olivier. 1998. “Le post-islamisme.” *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 85-86: 11-30.

Roy, Olivier. 2005. *Globalized Islam*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Roy, Olivier. 2007. *Secularism Confronts Islam*. Trans. George Holoch. New York: Columbia University Press.

Said, Edward. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Basic Books.

Sageman, Marc. 2008. *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty First Century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Saunders, Doug. 2012. *The Myth of the Muslim Tide: Do Immigrants Threaten the West?* New York: Vintage.

Scientific Council for Government Policy. 2006. *Dynamism in Islamic Activism. ReferencePoints for Democratization and Human Rights.* Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press.

Schiffauer, Werner. 2010. *Nach dem Islamismus: Eine Ethnographie der Islamischen Gemeinschaft Milli Görüş*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

Schneiders, Thorsten Gerald (ed.). 2010. *Islamfeindlichkeit: Wenn die Grenzen der Kritik verschwimmen*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag fűr Sozialwissenschaften.

Schwarzer, Alice. 2002. “Vorwort.” In *Die Gotteskrieger und die falsche Toleranz,* ed. by Alice Schwarzer. Cologne: Kieperheuer & Witsch.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1988. “Can the Subaltern Speak?” In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, 271-313. Champagne-Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1990. “Poststructuralism, Marginality, Postcoloniality and Value.” In *Literary Theory Today*, ed. by Peter Collier and Helga Geyer-Ryan, 219-44. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Terkessidis, Mark, and Yasemin Karakaşoğlu. 2006. “Gerechtigkeit für die Muslime!” *Die Zeit* (6 February).

**BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press**
**Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)**

Ulfkotte, Udo. 2013. *Vorsicht Bürgerkrieg!: Was lange gärt, wird endlich Wut*. Rottenburg: Kopp.

Wiktorowicz, Quintan. 2005. *Radical Islam Rising: Muslim Extremism in the West*. New York: Rowan and Littlefield.

Ye'or, Bat. 2005. *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis*. Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson Press.

Yükleyen, Ahment. 2012. *Localizing Islam in Europe: Turkish Islamic Communities in Germany and the Netherlands*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

**BDD-A28525 © 2018 Transilvania University Press**
**Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-16 04:53:32 UTC)**