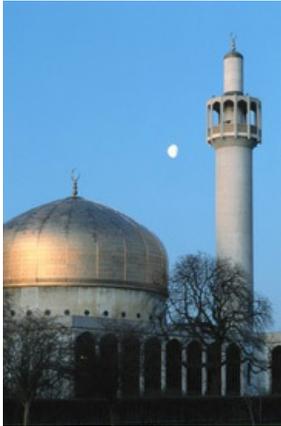


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Europeans Awakening to the Islamic Threat?

Wednesday, October 11, 2006



Will Europe become the heart of a new Islamic civilization? A growing number of Europeans are waking up to the threat.

In "[Across Europe, Worries on Islam Spread to Center](#)," reporters from The *New York Times* trace the growing consensus in Europe that Islam cannot be reconciled with "European values." As the reporters explain, "Europe appears to be crossing an invisible line regarding its Muslim minorities: more people in the political mainstream are arguing that Islam cannot be reconciled with European values."

More:

Many experts note that there is a deep and troubled history between Islam and Europe, with the Crusaders and the Ottoman Empire jostling each other for centuries and bloodily defining the boundaries of Christianity and Islam. A sense of guilt over Europe's colonial past and then World War II, when intolerance exploded into mass murder, allowed a large migration to occur without any uncomfortable debates over the real differences between migrant and host.

Then the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, jolted Europe into new awareness and worry.

The subsequent bombings in Madrid and London, and the murder of the Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh by a Dutch-born Moroccan stand as examples of the extreme. But many Europeans — even those who generally support immigration — have begun talking more bluntly about cultural differences, specifically about Muslims' deep religious beliefs and social values, which are far more conservative than those of most Europeans on issues like women's rights and homosexuality.

"A lot of people, progressive ones — we are not talking about nationalists or the extreme right — are saying, 'Now we have this religion, it plays a role and it challenges our assumptions about what we learned in the 60's and 70's,'" said Joost Lagendik, a Dutch member of the European Parliament for the Green Left Party, who is active on Muslim issues.

The concern articulated by Mr. Lagendik is rooted in a vast clash of worldviews. In this case, the clash is between the worldview of European secularism and the worldview of Islam. This is a dramatic collision.

Subsequent to the Enlightenment, European elites have been working nonstop to dismantle the continent's Christian heritage and the residual worldview that was produced by centuries of Christian influence. This is reflected in the sexual revolution and in the massive social and ideological transformations of the 1960s and 1970s.

Now, they are confronted with a worldview that poses a direct challenge to the European project — and they are waking up to this fact. In reality, it does not appear that the Europeans are up to this challenge. Secularism is a very flimsy foundation for a worldview — and the Muslims know it.

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