

**"MUSLIMS IN EUROPE: NEGOTIATING BETWEEN INTEGRATION,
ISOLATION AND ESTRANGEMENT"**

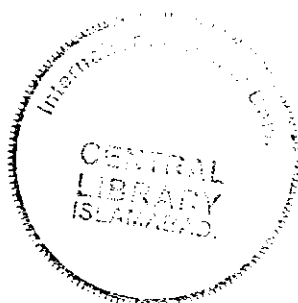
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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements of the degree of Masters of
Philosophy in Politics and International Relations**

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD
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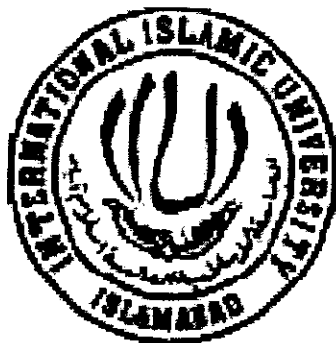
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TO 5620



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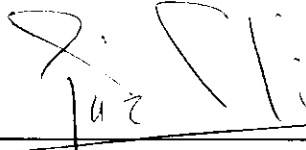
CERTIFICATION

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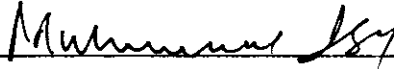


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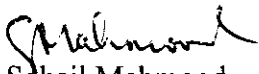
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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

The dynamic changes across the globe are very much felt in all human endeavours and having socio-political, economic and cultural ramifications in different countries. One major aspect of these developments is the demographic transformation in Europe characterised by multiethnic, multicultural and societal development. The presence of Muslims in modern day Europe has undoubtedly contributed to this development, hence making the presence of Muslim immigrants on the continent one of the major discussable issues among Europeans.

The presence of Muslims on the continent particularly in Western Europe became more prominent as far back as the 1950s soonest after the process of decolonization. Migration became an avenue for Muslim mobility across continents, prior to this era; Europe was only more acquainted with national or internal migration trend. At the very start of that period Muslims sojourn in Europe was noted for its economic shape. Thereafter the issue of permanent settlement or a longer-term sojourn became an issue as host societies never expected permanent stay of the foreign workers or guest workers as known in Germany. As time goes on, immigration issue became a serious concern for the government which resulted to the institutionalisation of immigration in Europe.¹

To better place Muslim in the right context and for the sake of convenience, Hammar and Tamas in a simple language believe an international migrant is that "person

¹ John. Salt, "The Business of International Migration," in *International migration into the 21st century: Essays in honour of Reginald Appleyard* ed. M.A.B. Siddique, 87 (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd, 2001)

who has moved from one country to another with the intention of taking up residence there for a relevant period of time.”² Hence places Muslim migrants in the larger context of immigration with the view of returning home after a short stay.

The presence of Muslims like every other immigrant in Europe shifted European migration trend from internal to international dimension or better said vertical to horizontal migration trend. The former is systematic population redistribution within a country; while international migration which gives birth to diaspora, the existence of certain group of people in a foreign country. This of course places the Muslim community in Europe as part of the diaspora.³

After a long stay and procreation in different European societies, the silent Muslim status shifted position and gained momentum for active public role. With the demand of a public space and recognition as part of the mainstream, European societies had to find a way to settle the demand of the Muslim minorities. The first generation of Muslims were not that demanding as their focal interest was economic benefit and sustenance, but the latter generations owing to social conditioning and acquaintance with western value system championed the cause of demanding for their own social status. However as it has always been the case with most immigrant community contending with identity dilemma. Muslim like most migrants often gets associated with themselves or people sharing same value. Argument for such propensity runs around the fact that identical communality gives solace and boosts the sense of togetherness.

² Tomas Hammar and Kristof Tamas, “Why Do People Go or Stay,” in *International Migration, Immobility and Development: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, Tomas Hammar et al, (Oxford: Berg, 1997) 16.

³ Skeldon, Roland. “The dangers of diaspora: Orientalism, the nation state and the search for a new geopolitical order”. in *International migration into the 21st century: Essays in honour of Reginald Appleyard* ed. M.A.B. Siddique, 109 (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd. 2001)

As the demand of Muslims grows for fair public representation, the host society became wary of this minority immigrant. Though the latter claims marginalisation, meanwhile the host believes it was lack of tendency to integrate into the mainstream. Hence the gulf continues to widen between the significant minority and majority host countries. Becoming part of the status quo is often problematic for migrants. International migrants have always been caught in the web of integration as many are uneasy to divorce with their socio-cultural heritage brought along to the host country. Nonetheless, history of minority presence in European countries attest to the reality that integration goes with time, depending on the accommodative facilities shared by the host country with the migrants.

By the advent of 9/11 in the United States, 7/7 in London, Madrid train blast and subsequent other dreadful acts, most European governments, media, academicians and rightist politicians became more wary of their Muslim communities. The atmosphere of fear was further created and more of stereotype view of Muslims was accentuated via the compelling media coverage. Such mistrust situation widens the gulf of understanding between host majority group and minority Muslim community. More importantly it replaced the existing parched and silent co-existence with suspicion, fear mongering and uncertain relation. *Who speaks for Islam* expresses the impact of Western thinkers' castigation on Islam and Muslims, even though the view maintained by this few thinkers have no pertinence with the real concern of million of Muslims in Europe.⁴

⁴ John I. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, *Who Speaks for Islam. What a Billion Muslims Really Think*, (Gallup Press, 2008)

1.2 Statement of the problem

The reconstruction of continental Europe from its destruction after the 2nd World War brought fore a new wave of industrialization and that further changed the course of European history. The latter milestone triggered a wave of migration trend into Europe as the new industrial economy needed migrant workers for its labour intensive sectors.

The economic growth witnessed in Europe after the 2nd World War and reconstruction period opened the continents for lot of immigrants from Asian, African and South American immigrants. Europe becoming the destination of many immigrants is of course informed by the economic crisis in the third world countries, of course part of the consequence of the World War. Therefore as poverty, economic problem and political troubles continue to strangle the developing countries, able people migrated towards Europe for a greener pasture. Hence the healthy economy was facilitated the demand of skilled and unskilled labourers wanting to solve their economic insecurity.⁵

As the Western economies maintain sustainable growth and richness, the lifestyle of people changed and there was job mobility. This new development spurred indifferent attitude for certain jobs seen as menial and below social status. This gives a further explanation for the need of unskilled labourers who are willing to work even if it is menial. In this backdrop, immigrants, Muslims (inclusive) made few European countries their destination for seeking economic security, residence and labour.

After much economic felicity the world market was dashed with a blow of oil-hike that gave birth to economic recession in the early 70s particularly affected the

⁵ Economic security in this sense means seeking for better economic opportunity as in job, welfare infrastructure, which sum total to being economically secured than what many migrants experienced back in their home countries.

developed nations. In view of this oil-hike, inflow of immigrants reduced as the economic recession affected most European economies.

On this account, the trend of migration to Europe got a new bearing so much that Zlotnik observed that by 1974 all major labour importing countries in continental Europe had to scrap their labour migration programmes or introduced sharp restrictions on the admission of migrant workers.⁶

Migration became one of the trends that made way for Muslims into Europe with distinct socio-political, economic and cultural orientations. Most of these migrants were evidently seeking economic security. One might expect that moving to Europe will end the lot of Muslims as well as many other migrants. Muslim migrants as well as many others were seen as guest workers expected to return to their native countries after a short while of labour stay.

The fact of the matter was that Europe was unsettled and not prepared for the permanent residence of its foreign migrant labourers, whose religious and socio-cultural composition threatens the mono-cultural society. The existence and presence of these migrants created a friction though not from the first generation of Muslims whose principal purpose in Europe was underscored by economic security. The friction rather came forth from subsequent generations in two folds.

On one hand was the generation of Muslims with great adaptability of the host culture though such flexibility and adaptation for the host culture does not necessarily summed up to total accommodation. Meanwhile on the other end are those Muslims

⁶ Hania Zlotnik, "Past Trends in International Migration and their Implications for Future Prospects" in *International migration into the 21st century: Essays in honour of Reginald Appleyard* ed. by M.A.B. Siddique, 234 (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd, 2001)

saturated by Islamic revivalism and spirit geared at taking greater visibility in the public sphere. Both of these generations essentially do not represent the position of the first generation, rather as a result of their leanings, often in conflict with the host society, a conflict characterised by the views of unacceptability, invisibility and visibility.

Conspicuously upon getting to Europe in search of greener pasture, Muslims were faced with identity dilemma, preserving their Islamic heritage or assimilating into the mainstream of the host countries. This social predicament and trend has been there over the ages but became accentuated by the event of September 11, 2001 and similar acts of terrorism across Europe. Europeans before these events passively accommodate their Muslim populations as different European countries have been trying different policy of pluralism in an attempt to showcase their understanding of multiculturalism.

The event of 9/11 and subsequent events across Europe triggered a generic anti-Muslim and Islam across Europe. The image of Islam has thus become a stock of ridicule in view of these events and being a European Muslims carries a metaphoric expression of social negativity. Symbolically, immigrants in general and Muslims particularly in the recent times, are seen as the expression and cause of social problems such as unemployment, proscribed behaviours, housing shortage, crime and cultural pollution. Being a significant minority, Muslim cultural value creates the climate of competition and muscles flexing with the native culture.⁷

The present scenario explains a great deal of how these European Muslims are faced with the question of negotiating and enduring between visibility and invisibility in the public sphere. The challenges in the public sphere surfaced in the obstruction to

⁷ Hammar Tomas, "Politics of Immigration Control and Politicisation of International Migration" in M.A.B. Siddique, ed. *International migration into the 21st century: Essays in honour of Reginald Appleyard*, (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd, 2001)

mosque construction, law banning hijab and niqab, lack of permission to observe prayer (salat) during work hours, lack of job opportunity for religious reason, racial discrimination, political in-participation, ghettoization, media discrimination and stereotyping (premised on press freedom), rightist politicians sentimentalism. attack on religious symbol and sacrilegious attitude towards creed and religious figures, European immigration laws, issue of citizenship and secularism.

All of these account for the challenges facing European Muslims. How much time would such uneasiness continue and to what extent can Muslims claim the right of being an integral part of the society. This laden question has been repeated timelessly and future circumstance will determine how the problems would be either solved or eliminated.

The issue and challenge is centred on the questions of integration, assimilation, segregation and marginalization. What measures must Muslims employ in becoming a full flesh European? Religious and cultural inclination are often seen as part of the roadblocks to integration, to what extent can Muslim compromise the fundamentals of their faith and culture in order to become fit within the European milieu. Islam or Muslims are seen as unsuitable for Europe, this argument has gone so well among European commentators, intelligentsia, politicians and the Press Media in the wake of terrorist attacks on Europe. Such an assertion would have to be understood not simply by present situation rather looking back to Islamic history and legacy would also be an avenue to substantiate that assertion. Of course European policies might appear challenging to Muslims, yet that alone would not suffice the whole discussion without

accounting for the role of internal issues posing challenge and as impediments in becoming a true European Muslim.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The purpose of the research is to study the social implications of the presence of Muslim in Europe. Doing that would require a great deal of understanding international migration that has greatly contributed to the contemporary Muslim presence in Europe. The research will also examine the nature of relations between the host European societies and migrant Muslim communities. The research at a certain level will scrutinize the view that integrational problem of Muslims in Europe has been principally due to European non-accommodativeness policy. Similarly task will be geared at identifying the various arguments surrounding Muslim isolation and integration. A clear understanding of this would be highlighted by historically tracing the circumstances surrounding other ethnic minorities and thus will make a comparison with the Muslim community. The research will then expound on critical issue of separate and preferential treatment of the Muslim community as regard to other minorities. Hence should integrational preferential treatment be highlighted in the manner European society deals with immigrant community, will be one of the questions this research will tackle. The research also aim to identify the cause and effect of different state immigration policy, Muslim cultural value, stereotype discourse, media, indulgence of rightists politicians and the event of 9/11 and other similar events on the integration of Muslims in Europe.

1.4 Significance of the study

In the recent times Muslims are treated with greater attention in the European media and academic writings. This attention is not a coincidence rather it was a

culmination of events resulting to the present state of affairs. Muslims have evidently been associated with violence, putting it in the European context 'terrorism.' One might be puzzled and start to conceptualise what might have engineered such hatred and resentment of Muslims. Firstly this research will examine materials explaining the resentments and to critically analyse how substantial these arguments stand. Secondly, it would be significant to examine the relationship between the mainstream European societies with other minorities. This would be sufficient in understanding why a dissimilar relation exists with Muslim minority. Thirdly, unlike many other works that discuss European Muslims from just historical literatures, this research would take into greater use newspapers materials and journal articles that discuss the daily happenings in Europe. In this background it would accentuate a critical objective of this work which is to identify the imperative factors which gives Muslims so much recognition in the media and why the European governments are nurturing concerns for their Muslim populations. This work would further help to place the discussion of integration and marginalization into context and its effect on socio-political and economic development of European Muslims. It would be great value for policy makers in understanding how the discussion of integration and marginalization is seen outside Europe by that try to solve the challenges. More importantly, the outcome of the research will become invaluable for academicians and researchers in the field of social science and would create a further understanding on how similar issue can be discussed from independent paradigms. Finally, it would broaden the perspective of the researcher on the socio-political and economic development of European Muslims.

1.5 Research Methodology

This research will draw on qualitative and quantitative analysis on the issue of integration in the European context. In this way, it would employ documentary analysis which includes both recently published materials as well as historical data that gives a background to the thesis. Secondly, in view of the fact that the event of 9/11 and subsequent events in Europe drew the curtain for attention towards Muslims, journal articles and newspapers would be of great asset in exploring the Muslim issue. Thirdly, this research would draw a great deal of data from reports of institutions within and outside Europe elucidating on European immigration laws in the recent times. Lastly, it has also planned to use survey data carried out by both local and international polling institutes which carries statistics and information concerning the European national-government and its relations with immigrants and minorities especially Muslims. In view of these, the research will be able to analyse and draw conclusion on how and what informs or act as roadblock to integration.

1.6 Research Questions

- What is the correlation between the event of 9/11, 7/7, Madrid train blast and the current level of stereotype against Muslims in Europe?
- What are the challenges waylaying the integration of Muslims in Europe.
- How does the state-theory of immigration influences integration of minority like the European Muslim minority?
- Are Muslims really not accommodative for integration and to what extent can the vacuum of misunderstanding be filled between the host European society and the Muslim communities. ?

1.7 Review of the Literature

Kepel (2006) identifies and analyses the reasons for European Muslims frustration, according to him it was the consequence of the US policies across the world in general and particularly in the Middle East. He further highlighted the fact that the disparity of opportunity in Europe tailors Muslim youth into extremism and radicalism. The consequence of course is what is now termed as Muslim fundamentalism across the globe. One might not fence the point that both former French prime minister and president highlighted this view that American-Middle East foreign policy would backlash on Europe as militant would have to return to Europe and foment troubles.⁸ Kepel was of the view that winning the heart and mind of Muslims particularly European Muslims and dampening the strength of terrorism can be achieved when policies are changed.⁹

Jorgen S. Nielsen's *Muslims in Western Europe* illustrates the history of early European Muslims and discusses the causes and direction of twentieth-century Muslim immigration; doing that the book highlighted how Muslim communities evolved in different European states. Nielsen was able to trace the origin of Muslims in modern Europe, presenting their ethnic groupings, organizations and cultural disposition in view of the host societies. The economic disparity facing Muslims in Europe Nielsen observed among other factors handicapping Muslim serious political participation, in lieu they exercise their political freedom by allying with recognized political parties and thereby acting under the latter's influence. However, the work observed that new generation of Muslims are now moving towards political integration in view of their understanding, education and political orientation which are incomparable with the earliest generation.

⁸ AFP News Agency, Iraq war has brought civil war, instability (November 15, 2006.)

⁹ Gilles Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West*, (Belknap Press, 2006)

Nielson highlights that uneasiness created by European officials for Muslim communities and their organizations through legal, political and bureaucratic structures makes matter worst for them and thus forcing Islam to becoming an ethnic identity.¹⁰

Unlike Nielson approach, Goody's *Islam in Europe* tries to establish the fact that it would be less difficult to reconcile the fact that Muslims and Islam have been part of Europe either as trade friends or conqueror within remindable history. Hence Islam should be seen as a reckonable force in Europe and Europeans cannot erase Islam from their history as Muslims have in the past made their influence felt across Europe before the modern era. Like Nielsen, Goody sees the new influx of Muslims as part of migration trend into Europe. This of course spurred a multicultural environment in Europe. Goody comparative analysis helps in understanding that integration is a muddy path in any multicultural society.¹¹

Yvonne Haddad articulates the fear among Muslims in Europe and North America in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*. Haddad looked at the issue from the standpoint of cultural and religious conservatism. The book explains the cultural and religious dilemma among European and North American Muslims. It leads to the argument of how much Muslims can give-in to their host countries and also questions the extent and limits of Western pluralism. Haddad brought forth the central issue of negotiation and endurance which treats the question of how many roads Muslims must walk before integration can really take place. It was quite extensive as it was multi-countries research. The book raised issues and questions as to "how can Muslims function within the secular and pluralistic traditions of Europe." European laws evidently

¹⁰ Jørgen S. Nielsen, *Muslims in Western Europe*, (Edinburgh University Press, 2004)

¹¹ Jack Goody, *Islam in Europe*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004)

want full cooperation and obedience of its migrant populace, yet Muslims have often claimed being unequally represented in the public sphere. Thus raises another serious question “Will Muslims come to be fully accepted as fellow citizens with equal rights.”¹²

Many European countries never thought their guest workers could finally want a permanent stay. With the permanent stay of these economic migrants many issues came forth that have to be tackled by the states. At time progresses, the host countries began to struggle over the accommodation of Muslim religious practices an issue that increasingly transformed into important political issue across Western Europe. Fetzer and Soper try to understand the arguments of European Muslims from the latter generation worldview. Fetzer and Soper identifies this new generation as Muslims with appreciable knowledge of western value thus uses these values in soliciting for their place in the public sphere. The authors bring to fore the economic paradigm in understanding European Muslims with emphasis that economic deficiency accounts for the political ineffectiveness of Muslims, thereby not in the position to effectively negotiate with the state. They also share the view that Media stereotype and public outward resentment of Muslim population became heightened with the dawn of September 11, 2001. With this complication the governments found it uneasy to resolving the growing Muslim population issues and more to that was the rise of the rightist politicians denouncing the presence of Muslims and Islam in the heart of Europe.¹³

Jocelyne Cesari’s *When Islam and Democracy Meet: Muslims in Europe and in the United States* supports Goody’s assertion about Islam and Muslims are integral part

¹² Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002)

¹³ Joel, S. Fetzer. Christopher, J. Soper., *Muslims and the State in Britain, France, and Germany*, (Cambridge University Press, 2004) 8

of Europe. The argument revolves around the fact that Muslim population have contributed to the overall development of their respective host societies. Cesari however recognizes the fact that Muslims living in western societies obviously see themselves as people of different religion and cultural heritage and simultaneously making effort in having impact on the public sphere through religious and cultural visibility. The dichotomy between the host and minority Muslim community consequently brings to fore an inevitable clash or confrontation.¹⁴

Muslims impulse of becoming more visible in the public sphere triggers irritation from the host countries as in the case of mosque construction, separate schooling system and many other (concessions) or necessities that makes a Muslim. Lars Dencik's *Jewish Life in Sweden: Cultural Autonomy and Social Integration* questions the possibility of such concession as her research showed that the Swedish Jews communities went through the four transitional paths of (marginalization, segregation, assimilation and integration) after which they became recognised ethnic group.¹⁵ Her argument insinuates that the Muslim communities in Europe will have to follow suit if at all their concessions will be granted by the host societies.

Bobby Sayyid's *A Fundamental Fear* sees the whole argument of Muslim-European integration from the lens of Euro-centrism, pointing to the argument of 'Social Darwinism' as template for the understanding of the discourse of Europe and its minority

¹⁴ Jocelyne Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet: Muslims in Europe and in the United States*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006)

¹⁵ Lars Dencik, "Jewish Life in Sweden: Cultural Autonomy and Social Integration." in a final report of *Islam, citizenship and the dynamics of European integration* at the conference of European Muslims and the Secular State in a Comparative Perspective, (June 30 and July 1 2003)

Muslim community.¹⁶ Arguing that integration problem of Muslim would remain if the larger European community continues to see others from inferior to them.

Tariq Ramadan's *Islam, the West and Challenges of Modernity* believes integration of Muslim into the mainstream European society can be achieved initially inwardly among Muslims through 'social jihad'.¹⁷ Ramadan like Cesari holds that Islam is a reality within the western sphere with a history that goes back to the Muslim Empire in Spain. Ramadan makes clear his view that Muslims in Europe will have better footing by reconstructing Islamic law and values so as to meet the challenges of western modernity although he does not concur with the fact that modernity is singularly western. Ramadan social jihad is war against illiteracy, poverty, crime, drugs as these according to him are the maladies confronting Muslim communities in Europe. He believes the Muslim-Europe problem can be bridged when both sides fill the communication gap and tries to redress what Asani called the clash of ignorance.¹⁸

Norman Daniel argues that the animosity between the Muslim European community and the host society delineates the centuries old baggage of misgiving. Thus he states the view that the current situation is not just a modern making but a compilation of stereotypes accumulated over the ages.¹⁹

¹⁶ Bobby S. Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear, Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism*, (London: Zed Books Ltd, 2003) 8

¹⁷ Tariq Ramadan, *Islam, the West, and Challenges of Modernity*, (Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 2003)

¹⁸ Ali S. Asani, "So That You May Know One Another: a Muslim American Reflects on Pluralism and Islam", in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 588, *Islam: Enduring Myths and Changing Realities* (Jul., 2003), 40-51

¹⁹ Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*, (Oneworld Publications, 2000)

1.8 Theoretical Framework

The research has employed the state and individual theory of migration as way of comprehending the mobility of Muslims across continents. These theories explore and expound on the necessity and imperative reasons for immigration and were equally useful in understanding the social consequences of immigration. Since the major argument evolves around integration, social integration theory was helpful in explaining why there is always animosity between the majority and minority in a given society. Social integration theory was equally helpful in understanding 'Social Darwinism' as one of those challenges of social integration. Employing the concept of psychology such as 'cognitive dissonance and enemy image' was helpful in understanding the evolution of hatred garnered against Muslims after the events of 9/11, 7/7 and the Madrid train blast. It consequently helped in expounding on the massive representation of Islam and Muslims in Europe in the recent times.

Chapter 2

2.1. Migration to Europe: Muslims migration trend to Europe

International migration has become a contentious trend for most European countries in the recent times. Immigrants came to Europe from various sections of the world, people from the developing continents of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Obviously these migrants carried with them different cultural, socio-religious and political beliefs an identification of their standpoints. Muslims are part of this international migration trend and one way or the other their existence in Europe has been characterized with certain features.

Migration is apparently determined by numerous compelling factors; nevertheless such factors are better explicated by the immigrants. Scholars of international migration have tried postulating and rendering reasons why people desire to migrate from their native land for a foreign land. People are turned immigrants when faced with religious persecution; political conflict, or political discrimination. Colonial past and linguistic factor have also engineered migration to certain countries, while others have taken advantage of economic prosperity and proximity as yardstick for their migration. On a whole, pull and push theory has been the classical migration theory over the past decades employed in analysing migration trend.

Estimate of the number of Muslims in Europe

Country	Total population	Muslims
Austria	8, 102, 600,	300000
Belgium	10, 192, 240	370,000
Bulgaria	8, 487, 317	1,110,295
Denmark	5330020	150000
Finland	5171302	20000
France	56,000,000	4,000,000-5,000,000
Germany	82,000,000	3,040,000
Greece	10,000,000	370,000
Hungary	10,043,000	20,000-30,000
Italy	56,778,031	700,000
Luxembourg	435,000	3.800
The Netherlands	15,760,225	695,600
Poland	38,667,000	15,000
Portugal	9,853,000	30,000-38,000
Romania	22,500,000	60,000
Spain	40,202,000	300,000-400000
Sweden	8,876,611	250,000-300.000
Switzerland	7,304,109	310.000
United Kingdom	55,000,000	1,406,000
Total	450,707,615	13,150,695-14,318,695

Source Marechal 2002²⁰

²⁰ B Marechal, "A Guidebook on Islam and Muslims in the wide contemporary Europe" Louvain-la-Neuve: Academia Bruylant in Muslims in Europe: The State of Research by Frank J. Buijs and Jan Rath,(New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002)

The problem with this statistic is not that it lacks substance but the number of Muslims mentioned in the table does not necessarily indicate the accurate figure of Muslims present in these European societies. This owes to many factors such as the lack of adequate arrangement to document immigrant population by their religion or ethnicity. It also follows that the available data accessible to European officials only tells of the legal immigrants while a large junk of undocumented immigrants are unnoticed either for legal or policy reason or some other reasons best known to the immigration departments. Yet some other report would rightly estimate the total number of Muslims in Europe at 15-16 million, this figure has consequences on the demography of Europe. It obviously place Islam as the 2nd largest religion of the continent after Christianity (all denominations inclusive). The growing number of Muslims has somewhat indicate challenge to the cultural and ethnic composition of some European societies, hence one would not be stunned to see various form of anti-Muslim radical nationalists chanting the slogan of anti-immigration tacitly and implicitly directed at the Muslim immigrants. The 'Anti Islamisation Congress' stated for September 19-20, 2008 in Cologne, Germany which tends to congregate far-right political forces and some of the most inflammatory names like (France's Jean- Marie Le Pen, Austria's Heinz-Christian Strache, Belgium's Filip Dewinter and the host Pro Koeln associated with neo-Nazi parties) in European politics landscape sends a message of how true some Europeans are really interested in integration.²¹

²¹ *Islamonline*, "OIC Slams Germany Anti-Islam Meeting," (August 10, 2008) http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=Article_C&cid=1218367670154&pagename=Zone-English-News/NWELayout

2.2 Muslims in Britain

Migration trend towards Britain is obviously characterised by certain distinctive features such as linguistic factor and colonial connection particularly for the Muslim migrants from South Asia, Middle East and Africa. Much documented data has apparently focused on South Asia Muslim migrants not because they are the sole Muslims in Britain rather this is informed by their numerical strength.

The presence of Muslims in Britain dated back to the pre-2nd World War era when Muslims got their foot on the port cities of London, Cardiff, and Glasgow however Islamic practices took a low profile and an informal status. The developmental process after the war resulted in the influx of many unskilled and semiskilled labours from South Asia. Like in many other European nations, these new immigrants had to be engaged in menial poorly paid job unwanted by the native Britons. It was glaring that these migrants got solace in textile settlements such as Bradford, Leeds and Manchester. Apparently till date these migrants have remained significant part of these respectively communities, a situation where Muslim constitute considerable segment of the local population.

The aftermath of the 2nd WW leading to the erosion of European political, economic and military power drew in the era of decolonization, a process that facilitated the independence of many colonies. India and Pakistan being the very first nations to be liberated from the claws of colonialism in 1947 got the benefit of the British Commonwealth open door policy to its former colonies to enter Britain. Hence the period between 1950s and 1960s saw a new change in Muslim presence in Britain as British companies gave opportunity to workers from former colonies to come work in Britain.²²

²² Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002)

This however changed the nature of presence from what was experienced during the pre-war era. Yet the fact remains that Muslims during this period still operationalize their religious duties individually devoid of any concrete collective gathering as might be seen today. One other feature of this period was the chain-migration, as settled migrants had to facilitate the reunion of their family members in Britain, this of course accounts for the increase in Muslim population.

This should not lead to the view that Britain was solely for the South Asian or Muslims in particular; by the late 1960s and 1970s immigration law changed and that obstructed the free flow of South Asian into Britain as seen in the 50s. Successive immigration law however did not keep at bay Muslims from migrating to Britain as migrants from the 50s refused going back home and thus opened a new page in the history of Muslim history in Britain. The fact of the matter was that many of the immigrants facilitated reunification of their family members which also account for the increase in South Asian numerical strength in the street of Britain. Generation after generation Muslims today account for 1.6 million of the total population of Britain, half of whom according to Tahir Abbas are Pakistani.²³

2.3 Muslims in France

Muslim immigration to France shares some commonalities with other European nations in view of the colonial connection between the immigrants and France. Unlike the South Asian Muslim migrants in Britain, most of North African (Maghribean) constitute the largest segment of Muslim migrants in France and also see France as point of destination for both linguistic convenience and proximity sake.

²³ Tahir Abbas, "Outlines the History of Islam in Britain, Perspective: Islam Has a Long History in Britain," *The Birmingham Post*, (November 26, 2005)

The French national institute which monitors immigration (Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques (INSEE) observed that immigration accounts for 7 percent of the total French population. Meanwhile French census puts Maghribean living in France as 1,393,195 out of total immigrant population of 4,165,952. According to (INSEE: 2000) there are 614,207 Algerians, 572,652 Moroccans, and 206,336 Tunisians. This however should not suggest that North African Muslims are the single Muslim group in France rather the point to be noted is that they constitute the largest Muslim community in France as compared to Muslim from Francophone West Africa countries, Arabs, Asians and others from East Europe.²⁴

With the numerical strength of the Muslim community in France as it is the case in other European societies, Islam turned out as the 2nd largest religion after Catholicism. Yet one must not lose the sight that Muslims in France fall into classes, while some see themselves as Muslims by identity others disassociate themselves from their family tradition and would prefer to be identified as secular French.

Similarly other class of Muslim sees the necessity to integrate into the mainstream and at the same time be in accord with their family Islamic tradition. While the last group distinguishes itself from the society taking a puritan position as anti-secularism and identifiable with Islamic awakening. French Muslim represented mostly by immigrants from North Africa have long been struggling and juggling with the whole idea of integration.²⁵

²⁴ Caitlin Killian, "The Other Side of the Veil: North African Women in France Respond to the Headscarf Affair" *Gender and Society*, Vol. 17, No 4, August (2003)

²⁵ Paul Gallis, et al, "Muslims in Europe: Integration Policies in Selected Countries" *Congressional Research Service, Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division, the Library of Congress*, November 18, (2005)

France republicanism and secularism stands out in Europe as France sees itself as the heart of Europe secularism. On this backdrop, France takes no likings for multiculturalism seen in some Europe countries, rather the French government demand of its foreign migrants to fully assimilate and become French. This obviously reminiscence France colonial policy that demand of its colonies full flesh association and assimilation contrary to British indirect-rule policy. In view of this policy, many Muslim immigrants in France found the system restrictive, non conducive or accommodating to foreign culture. Yet statistical data puts 2 million of France's 6 million Muslims as citizens.²⁶

2.4 Muslim in Germany

Most researched works often place the Turkish community in Germany foremost when discussing the presence of Muslim in Germany. Muslim community in Germany obviously came from different region of the world, but the fact remains that the Turkish community have taken the lead. Unlike Muslims in Britain and France that share certain commonalities like linguistic relations and colonial connection, German Muslims or immigrants found themselves in Germany as a result of inter-governmental arrangement (bilateral agreements.) Like other war affected regions of Europe, the post 2nd WW Germany witnessed second wave of industrial development but with the dearth of workers for the industries. This became an imperative reason why the German government sought for labour outside its borders as the foreign recruited labourers would have to meet the needs of Germany's expanding economy.

Evidently it was in the national and economic interest of Germany that prompted the Bonn administration between the mid-1950s and the early 1970s, signing agreements

²⁶ *ibid*

with south European, southeast European, and North African countries for foreign labours known as guest workers. The hope of the government was that such arrangement would lessen domestic labour problem and at the same time it was of advantage to the other countries in view of foreign remittance, reduction in domestic unemployment, unskilled labourers might returned home as semiskilled or skilled upon the time spent in German industrial sector. Barbara Freyer Stowasser observed that the German government signed a number of recruitment treaties with governments of Italy (1955), Spain (1960), Greece (1960), Turkey (1961 and 1964), Morocco (1963), Portugal (1964), Tunisia (1965), and Yugoslavia (1968) respectively.²⁷ Barbara also contended that “By 1990, 34 percent of all foreign workers, and 32 percent of the foreign resident population, were Turks. In the early 1990s, almost two million Turkish citizens lived in Germany.”²⁸

It was never in the plan of the government to give a permanent residence to these foreign recruited workers as they were known as guest worker. But due to the demand of the economy and the economic integration of these workers into the industrial sector it became hard for the system to forcefully send the guest back home and that paved way for the immigrants to increase numerically while residing in Germany. More-so was the lenient posture of the Left particularly the (Social Democrats, Greens) favouring an open policy and foreigners rights as compared to the Right (Christian Democrats) in favour of tougher law on immigration.²⁹ Nevertheless this opened way for Turkish guest workers to stay in the country with a growth of new generation.

²⁷ Barbara F. Stowasser, “The Turks in Germany: From Sojourners to Citizens, Historical Roots of German Conceptions of Nationhood and Citizenship” in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, edited by Y.Y Haddad, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002)

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Ibid

In today's Germany Muslims account for 3.5 percent of Germany's population, of about 3.3 million of the total population, meanwhile Muslim birth rate is 3 times higher than for non-Muslims with an expectation that Muslim numerical strength double by 2015.³⁰

2.5 Muslims in Italy

Bearing the defeat of the 2nd WW, Italy like every other devastated country was picking up from the wreckage of the war. It was evidently not easy to repack itself towards industrialization, coupled with the economic recession of the 70s and the political crisis that rocked the country made Italy part of the net emigration countries in Europe.

The discussion of immigration towards Italy is obviously a recent phenomenon as compared to other countries where the process started not later than late 50s. Hence during that period Italy was also contributing its quota to immigration in other country. Along the line, Italy moved away from its traditional emigration status to a net immigration country due to good economic standing during the late 70s and a sharp difference in the 90s. It is in this connection that the shift from emigration to immigration country opened a new page in history of modern Italy. This new trend in Italian history brought in an increase in outgoing remittance and decrease in incoming remittance during the year 1998 for the very time in the modern history of Italy. In the same vein, Italy

³⁰ <http://www.pbs.org/wbgbh/pages/frontline/shows/front/map/de.html>, also see Paul Gallis, et al, "Muslims in Europe: Integration Policies in Selected Countries" *Congressional Research Service, Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division, the Library of Congress*, November 18, (2005)

seconded Germany and France tailed behind Italy in the influx of immigrants to these countries.³¹

At the beginning, people did not understand why foreigners were coming to Italy as migrants. Soonest it became a realisation that immigrants are indeed needed in view of the growing production system of the country. Yet, Italians reserved certain resentment for the new migrants with the sentiment that these new folks are responsible for the lost of jobs. The nurtured fear of course accentuates as immigrants were believed to be enjoying similar social benefits liable only to the natives, meanwhile migrants were equally not exculpated from the increase in crime rate and other social proscribed acts ³²

Like other EU members, regularisation of immigration was taken seriously as the Italian government wanted to ensure a balance between the new migrants and the natives. Such regularisation process was not resented by the general public, who at one time believed they have faced similar discriminatory policy when Italy was an emigration country. In spite the regularisation policy, the government remained consonance with the ground reality in the country. Italy faces demographic decline, hence acceptance of immigrants into the country will be filling the demographic gap, while on a serious note Italian new industrial development needs to match up with other EU countries, but its feasibility will also depend on the acceptance of migrants.

The rise in immigration and the presence of foreigners takes place in a context of sharp demographic decline. The Italian fertility rate has

³¹ Jonathan Chaloff, "Current Research into Education for Immigrants in Italy," *Child Immigration Project, Fondazione Censis*, Rome: Presented at the Fourth International Metropolis Conference, Washington, DC: December 9, (1999)

³² "Migrants, minorities and employment in Italy, exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination," Raxen 3 Report *European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia Report (EUMC)*, (2002)

been about 1.2, the lowest in the world, for more than a decade, and the population is now in decline (at a rate of 0.1% annually). Demographers predict that the population will drop by about 5.3% in the next two decades, with the segment under 20 years old dropping by an astonishing 32.3%. This means that the current presence of immigrants, about 2.2% of the population, at the current rate of immigration, will triple to about 6.2% in 20 years. Among the under-20 population, immigrants should make up about 7.7% of the overall population.³³

Coming back to Muslim migration to Italy, traditionally, immigrants from economic and political instable countries like North Africa, the Philippine and former communist states like Yugoslavia and Albania made Italy a destination. For Muslim North Africa immigrants, proximity, economic and political instability were the pressing factors why they made Italy their destination. The demand for foreign workers and the indifference attitude of Italians to certain professions pushed Muslim migrants toward Italy.³⁴ Maria Adele Roggero however noted that Muslim presence in Italy was more felt not later than 1980s.³⁵ Muslims like every other immigrants opted for Italy simply because of its relatively relaxed immigration policy. This of course Maria sees as a characterisation of countries like (Spain and Greece, Portugal along with Italy) in the South of Europe. Muslim immigrants to Italy share same trait with other Muslim (and immigrants) migrating to other European countries in view of their unskilled capacity and

³³ Kimberly Hamilton, "Italy's Southern Exposure," *Migration Policy Institute*, (May 2002)

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Maria Adele Roggero, "Muslims in Italy" in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, ed. Y.Y Haddad, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002)

being semiliterate. The sharp difference which made Italy distinctive from other countries under studied was that the Muslim immigrants entered into Italy during the heighten period of Islamic awakening characterised by the Iranian revolution, resurgence of Muslim Brotherhood in the Arab world and the Rushdie saga.

Since there is no adequate official statistical data of Muslim in Italy yet the available data as presented by an online blog observed that there are 500,000 Muslim immigrants currently resident in Italy, making up 1% of the total population. Most of the Muslims in Italy were born in Albania, Morocco, Albania, Tunisia, Senegal and Egypt Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Somalia. 25,000 Italian citizens have converted to Islam. 719,000 Muslims are resident in Italy.³⁶ Meanwhile Roggero noted that almost two decade ago there were some 304,000 Muslim immigrants in Italy, which approximately amounts to 29 percent of the total legal immigrant population.

At the end of 1998, their numbers had increased to more than 436,000, and they constituted nearly 35 percent of the immigrant population as a whole. Yet she argues that Muslims today in Italy can be estimated around 600,000, including the 7,000 to 10,000 Italians who have converted to Islam.³⁷ Nevertheless the increasing strength of Muslims has made the religion of Islam second on the ladder after Catholicism. The fact however remains that the Muslim community in Italy is scattered across the country by which half of the 600,000 live in northern Italy, 29 percent in central Italy, and the remaining in southern Italy and on the islands.³⁸

³⁶ Islamawareness, <http://www.islamawareness.net/Europe/Italy/count.html> (August15, 2008)

³⁷ Maria Adele Roggero, "Muslims in Italy" in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, ed. Y.Y Haddad, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002)

³⁸ Ibid

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Currently Italian Muslims can be categorized into five strata. Those from former communist states like Albania show little or no interest in religion as a result of the protracted communist rule. The second group juggles between the local culture and the Islamic culture of their families, though seeing religion as a private matter. The third stratum is the staunch religious adherents frequenting mosque daily and exhibiting their Islamic leaning. The fourth group takes the image of the brotherhood Islamist, like the Tijaniyah and Muridiyah predominately among the Senegalese. Native Italian converts are said to be attracted to this group. The last layer is that group wanting a resurgence of Islam as the global leading religion, which in the diction of the west can be termed as fundamentalist.

2.6 Muslims in Spain

Islamic heritage, influence and presence in Spain (Andalusia) obviously are indelible part of the history of either Spain or entire Europe at large. At particular point in history Islamic caliphate ruled over Spain for almost 800 years before the Reconquista (reconquest) during which King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella in 1492 fought against the Muslim rulers and was accentuated by the fall of Grenada. The latter became the milestone that further paved way for the expulsion of Muslims from the helm of leadership and ultimately from Spain. Later during the Inquisition Muslims became the victims of forceful conversion, persecution and expulsion from Spain. Yasmin Alibhai-Brown however noted that certain Spanish society still reminiscence the Islamic heritage in terms of Arabic place names, irrigation systems, gardens and cultural influences.³⁹

³⁹ Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, "Sketches of Spain: In Andalusia's Moorish Towns, There Is Hope for the Future of Islam in Europe," *New Statesman*. Vol.135. Issue: 4808, (September 4, 2006) 48

Muslims arrival in Spain in the later period after the 2nd WW was more a later event as compared to the inflow of Muslim migrants to Britain, France and Germany between 1950s and 1960s. Unlike the three latter countries with relatively less interaction with the Muslim, Spain like every other Mediterranean countries have maintained a long historical attachment with Muslims. In fact the proximity of Spain with the Muslim societies of North Africa and its long history of Islamic Moorish caliphacy better explain the undisputable rapport between Spain and Islam. Yet documented fact suggests that serious migration of Muslims to Spain became a reality after the fall of Franco in 1975.⁴⁰

Before its economic growth, Spain like its counterparts in the South of Europe was an emigration country. The country shifted from emigration to immigration country in the fall of the Franco dictatorship, a period characterised by rapid economic growth and low birth rate.⁴¹ The shift from emigration to immigration potentially made Spain the destination for immigrants in view of certain imperatives.

Spain is characterized by a robust demand for low-skilled foreign labour. In addition, it has one of the largest informal economies in the European Union (EU), a narrow "front door" for immigrant admissions, and difficulties controlling irregular flows and stocks. Additional factors that contribute to the inflow and permanency of irregular migration in Spain include a poorly managed and financed administrative bureaucracy for the management of immigration, well-developed migration networks, and geographic or cultural proximity to dynamic source countries. The combination of these elements makes Spain an attractive country for unauthorized immigration and helps

⁴⁰ Paul Gallis, et al, Muslims in Europe: Integration Policies in Selected Countries

⁴¹ Ibid

explain how over one million irregular immigrants accumulated in less than four years since the previous regularization program in 2000 to 2001.⁴²

Spain of course did not distant itself from the prevailing regularization policies operational in Europe, yet the border of Spain received an increasing number of immigrants during the 60s owing to the tight and tough immigration laws across Europe and in North American restricting inflow of immigrants. During this period many North Africa immigrants particularly Moroccan stock made inroad into Spain.⁴³

Anuario Estadístico de Extranjería, (2000) reported that Spain due to its open door policy and relatively soft migration policy has become the home to 895,720, of whom 361,437 were Europeans, especially British (76,402) and Germans (60,828); 261,385 were Africans, mainly Moroccans (161,870).⁴⁴ Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla have become the principal targeted islands of many illegal immigrants struggling their way from Africa. Countries in North Africa have always been used as launching pad for reaching mainland Spain. This adventurous undertaking has caused many their lives as many immigrants lost their lives in the Mediterranean Sea, ending their dream of greener life in Spain (Europe).

Jordi Moreras was of the view that Muslims in Spain are heterogeneous community in that they have been living in Spain as peripheral small communities in the towns of Ceuta and Melila. Having a slow nationalization process which does not avail

⁴² Joaquín Arango and Maia Jachimowicz, "Regularizing Immigrants in Spain: A New Approach," Complutense University of Madrid, *Migration Information*, www.migrationinformation.org

⁴³ Extranjería A de Estadístico, "The evolution of migration in Spain," www.spanishkid.org/si-evolmigra.html (2000)

⁴⁴ Ibid

them wide range of opportunity, however unlike some European countries where Muslims have failed to secure a common ground, Spanish Muslims were able to develop into a community which gave birth to the Spanish Islamic Commission recognized by the government. This organization has been working for the growth and enhancement of Islam in Spain.⁴⁵

The statistical data of Muslims in Spain has become a debatable issue owing to many factors. The Spanish government although might have detail of its legal Muslim migrants but hard to document the illegal migrants. The Spanish Ministry of the Interior puts the documented migrants from Muslim countries around 600,000 of which about 370,000 were Moroccans.⁴⁶

On the other hand comes the estimate of the Federation of Spanish Islamic Entities that sees Muslims around 1 million, amounting to 2.4% of a total Spanish population of 42.7 million. In similar vein other source put Muslims around 700,000 of the total population. By and large, Muslims from North Africa particularly Moroccans characterized the symbol of Muslims in Spain, partly for the proximity of this country to Spain.

At this juncture it becomes apt to submit that various European countries identified have been mainly characterized by particular Muslim community from particular country. Britain is identifiable mostly with Muslims from the Subcontinent, while the French Muslim community though diverse yet particularly overwhelmed by Muslim from North Africa (Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian). Turkish Muslims play

⁴⁵ Moreras Jordi, "Musulmanes en Barcelona: Espacios y dinamicas comunitarias "Muslims in Barcelona community Spheres and Dynamism." *International Migration Review*, Vol. 35 (Autumn 2001)

⁴⁶ Paul Gallis, et al, "Muslims in Europe: Integration Policies in Selected Countries"

undisputable role in Germany and the Moroccan (North African) Muslims undoubtedly made stronghold in Spain. Italy seems to be different situation where Muslim community is not particularly dominated by a particular group; rather a composition of Morocco, Albania, Tunisia, Senegal and Egypt Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Somalia community.

All of these migrants have chosen their destination for reasons best expounded above. The British migration trend was spurred by linguistic and colonial linkage. The French trend equally shares some commonalities with Britain as immigrants also see France accessible for colonial and linguistic opportunity. The German case evidently makes itself distinctive from the two other western European countries as immigration took the dimension of bilateral cooperation between Germany and countries of departure. Italy and Spain are bed-fellows sharing the same region (South Europe) at one time they were net emigration countries and later became immigration countries as a result of socio-political and economic development. Meanwhile immigration to these two countries actually was facilitated by proximity reason. In spite the dissimilarity of migration in south and west, one cannot dismiss the fact that immigration became a necessity for their various economies at different point of their history.

Consequently longer stay and expectation of immigrants taking permanent residence was never expected or imaged by governments in these countries. But the unanswered question is 'who to blame' would it be the immigrants or the host societies.

- (a) Illegal or undocumented immigrants wanting job for survival, whose economies were long ruined by colonial traumatic administration or

- (b) Opportunist employers paying below standard and lacking good working environment and industrial law and are ready to give out jobs to undocumented immigrants outside the policy of the government.

2.2. Muslim minority in Europe, challenges and implication

In the present day Europe much talk on integration of ethnic minority or immigrant community is mostly centred on the Muslim community. The reason for this obviously revolves around many factors, one for which religion and culture stands out. Consequently the event of 9/11 and other similar events in Europe can also not be disconnected from why European governments are seriously demanding the assimilation and total integration of their Muslim immigrant community.

However 9/11 and other related events were not really the cause of concern as the presence of Muslims in Western Europe dated back to several years though in less appreciable number. It was however several years after the 1960s industrial boom across Europe that propelled the influx of immigration and thereafter European governments started nurturing the concern and way of solving the new trend of multicultural society informed by the presence of not only Muslim immigrants but other migrants seeking greener pasture.

Nevertheless in the recent times as Paul Statham and many like him observed “the presence of Muslims has often been depicted by politicians and commentators as a challenge to the norms, values, and principles of liberal democracy.”⁴⁷ The reason why Europe finds Muslim migrant troublesome cannot be dissociated from the latter’s religio-

⁴⁷ Paul Statham, Resilient Islam: Muslim Controversies in Europe,” *Harvard International Review Volume: 26*. Issue: 3. (2004)

cultural leaning. Muslim cultural attachment and religious compulsion which is not limited to indoor alone makes Muslim migrants in Europe vulnerable to attack of being anti-adaptation, assimilation and integration.

Islam as a religion cannot be equated with other religions of ethnic minorities in Europe simply because it transcends the limit of religious rite and further wants a socio-political role for its adherents. Hence the exhibition of cultural and religious symbols in the public sphere creates a fear of tussle, a brawl that can be explained as anti-secularism and anti-European value system.

Different approaches to integration and assimilation of migrant employed in different part of Europe informs us of the fact that Europeans are still longing for a united policy in tackling the issue of immigration. The reason for this lack of united policy goes with the fact that every state will make only commensurate policy for the ground reality within its jurisdiction.

Yet studies have shown how certain European countries make distinction and differentiation among ethnic minorities with which Muslim minority is not an exemption, such doing also accounts for the gap of cultural understanding within European societies. Most arguments goes in the same direction that closing the gap of cultural understanding between Muslim migrants and the host society is not a matter of few years, rather Muslims like every other immigrants would have to take the hard way the only way towards serious integration. Paul Statham like Lars Dencik⁴⁸ opined that

For example, most of Britain's Jewish population is descended
from Eastern European Jews who immigrated between 1880 and

⁴⁸ Lars Dencik, "Jewish Life in Sweden: Cultural Autonomy and Social Integration," in a final report of *Islam, citizenship and the dynamics of European integration*, (August, 31 2003)

1910. Upon arrival, these groups were visibly different with their own religions and practices, yet now several generations on, they are deeply assimilated into the British way of life.⁴⁹

Statham however concluded that solving Muslim related issues “what is needed in response to conflicts over Islam are pragmatic, practical policy discourses of accommodation that are based on factual understandings of the scale, type, and nature of the actual problems, away from distortions of public debate.”⁵⁰

This is of course goes down well with the declaration of the conference of European Imams held in Vienna Austria, April 2006. The conference which converge Muslim representatives all across European countries declared that “Integration is no one-way street, but should be seen as a mutual process,” involving both the Muslim community and the host society.⁵¹

Bassam Tibi also argues that it would be totally unimaginable for Europeans to expect Muslim to totally do away with their Islamic identity; rather they have to come to term with the reality of Muslim presence. Europe should wake up to the contribution of its Muslim community as Cesari noted. One is the multicultural contributive role of Muslims in Europe although some Euro-centric often ridicules such multicultural contribution. While some angles hold that Muslims should equally adjust their religion in a broader context fitting into the cultural milieu of Europe.⁵² On a different note

⁴⁹ Paul Statham, *Resilient Islam: Muslim Controversies in Europe*, *Harvard International Review Volume*: 26. Issue: 3. (2004)

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ *DW World*, “European Imams Stress Social Integration” <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,1965132,00.html> (Revised 25-8-08)

⁵² Al-Sayyad, Nezar and Manuel, Castells, *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam: Politics Culture and citizenship in the age of globalization* ed. (Berkeley: University of California, 2002)

Professor Riad suggested that it would be appreciable enough to draft a European code of Muslim law applicable to the personal status of all Muslims resident in Europe.⁵³

2.2.1 Integrating European Muslims

Apparently, Muslims in the recent times takes the headlines-led whenever the issue of integration is raised in the European context. The impression has always been that of a troublemakers refusing to succumb to the dictate of the host country and wanting to draw parallel line arguably positioning themselves distinctive from others. The fact of the matter is that both sides (accuser and the accused) share common grounds which are yet to be explored rather they both have permitted unnecessary instinctive values to debar their sensibility from the reality.

Islam as understood by historians is an accommodative faith; readily to integrate itself and accommodate foreign culture insofar it has little impact on the fundamental principles of the religion. Premised on this fact makes Muslims vulnerable to accept others culture. Perhaps Islamic scholars have rightly observed that the advent of Islam was not geared at obliterating other religion, culture and ethics rather it came to redress, support and consolidate the past. Hence for Europeans hanging on with the view that Muslim immigrants are anti-integration will be far away from the point. The scenario arguably can be logically seen as a display of supremacy between the majority and minority struggling to exert their identical value and cultural superiority.

Muslims being a part of the immigration trend into the industrial part of Europe sometimes see themselves at the receiving end, people ill-fated by their intention to

⁵³ Carlier. Jean-Yves, "Le Statut Personnel des Musulmans: droit compare et droit international prive." *International and Comparative law Quarterly* Vol. 42 (July 1993)

migrate for greener pasture, whose identity is under duress in conforming to the demand of the larger European society. European governments and the larger public are equally of the impression that Muslims are obstinate which of course exacerbates the tension. The mantra often plays 'love Europe or you leave it', however one must not confuse this right-wing opinion as the general view held by most accommodating people of Europe. The latter particularly the Southern (Europe) has for ages had good rapport and interaction with Muslims in view of North Africa proximity to this part. Though, Western Europe cannot totally dismiss any acquaintance with Muslims, even though it deeply Christian values placed a demarcation between the Christian West and Muslim East. Yet closer relationship came forth as migration intensified into Europe, thus came the reality and dilemma of relating with this new faces of immigrants having distinctive culture from that of the Europeans.

The view is somewhat floated that Muslims in Europe have failed integration let alone moving closer to assimilation. Serious European governments have one time or the other floated ideas to solving the issue of integration but a fruitful outcome is yet becoming evident. Some observers of Muslims in Europe believe the remedy to Muslim plight lies with Muslims themselves. The fact that they came with their culture, religion and value put them at friction with the larger European values, on this note the necessity for adjustment becomes paramount. The trend towards creating a European Muslim is one of those remedy plausible enough to bridge the gap of differences. However plausible the idea would depend on the flexibility of Muslims to acquiesce and that itself remains a big discussion. Being European Muslims demands literacy in the language of the host country, adopting the local culture, and awareness of European socio-political values.

The fear among some Muslims particularly the first generation of Muslim migrants revolves around losing their local culture at the mercy of the host culture. Emotional attachment is necessarily attached with the preservation of certain values as a channel for the continuity of native tradition. European countries still wanting in multicultural policy see such cultural preservation approach as demonstration of defiance to the larger society. That further explains the dilemma of identity with which Muslim migrants sometimes see as long term battle which is prone to end on a pyrrhic victory.

Blaming Muslims for their failure of integration would not be totally right rather what do Europeans feel about the presence of migrants is another question many have given no serious assessment. Bridging the gap of ignorance as one Muslim youth observed would be wise path to tread.⁵⁴ European governments should not downplayed instead should seriously probe the demand by Muslims and necessity of a multicultural society, this of course would further pave way for a solution to integration. But how serious would this take shape if immigration remains contemptuous. On a conceptual platform, immigrant and immigration have become symbolic in international migration, so much that the metaphoric expression of these two words in Europe is equal to social problems. Immigrant and immigration have nonetheless become symbolically negative, expressing cause of social problems such as unemployment, proscribed behaviours, housing shortage, crime and cultural pollution. It is obvious that the existence of the immigrants triggers some amount of hatred as their minority culture would create multicultural society hence competing and flexing muscles with the native culture.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ A mini roundtable meeting among British Muslims hosted by Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILdAT) at Best Western Hotel Islamabad, (April 30, 2007)

⁵⁵ Grete Brochmann and Tomas Hammar, *Mechanisms of immigration control: A comparative analysis of European regulation policies*, ed. (New York: 2001)19

Ceteris paribus the nub of the matter remains an intrinsic discourse among Muslim intellectuals in the west, the European public opinion and the government. Having said all these, I think at this juncture an introspective look on why Muslims have failed integration let alone assimilation should merit a deep discussion. This is not an attempt to shoulder blame on the immigrants or to pat the back of the Europeans as people with goodwill rather it is an exercise of understanding pits which can be filled by Muslims as mentioned that certain remedies lies with Muslims to solving their problems in Europe.

2.2.2 Fragmentation and Leadership Crisis

The nature of internal fragmentation among Muslims in Europe further explains the hurdles towards a real integration into the European mainstream. This of course is a carryover effect from countries of origin, rather than take a unified approach to the problem facing them; they often seek solace in disunity which has added no value to their profile. Perhaps this to some extent informs the approach and nature of rapport adopted by most European government towards their ethnic minority particularly the Muslims who failed to broker a common ground among themselves as a result of variation in orientation and religious affiliation. This scenario calls for critical understanding as much as other ethnic minorities have always found a common ground for themselves.

The progressive status of Jews in Europe should not simply be clichéd with the sympathy for aged holocaust believed to have been perpetrated against Jews rather one should see the light in the readily accommodative psychic of the Jews wherever they live. On this premise, Muslims have always failed to secure good standing with the

government for the latter needs a single representative or organization to deal with. Meanwhile, the sectarian difference, cultural and political sentiments of European Muslims obviously have failed them. Such fragmented grouping enhances the notion for a European Islam which definitely scorns the very fabric of Islamic universal oneness and does not appeal to the liking of some European Muslims. This argument should be seriously assessed by Muslims in diaspora be it in Europe or North America. I would borrow from the speech of a young British Muslim; part of the delegates hosted by Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILdAT) in Islamabad that Muslims in Europe particularly in Britain are ‘members of a ship without captain.’⁵⁶

The vacuum of a serious leadership and organization among Muslims in Europe has not been explored. Its essence is yet to be comprehended as channel that could galvanize government recognition and put them on the same footing and having the opportunity to enjoy facility accorded to other faith groupings.

In addition, internal difference among Muslims often helps other problems to widen in scope. A good example of such is the British Muslims mainly of South Asian origin. There is great disparity in academic excellence among Indian, Pakistan and Bangladeshi Muslims. This is what could be referred to as the carryover syndrome haunting their sensibility and togetherness.

Even though they all share similar religio-cultural traits yet they have failed to move on the same track. On what grounds would a serious integration manifest when there is little or no co-operation even within the Muslims? Such lack of togetherness and cooperation explains the weakness of any group in any given society.

⁵⁶ Mini roundtable meeting hosted by PILdAT

The unity of Muslim is equally essential for any serious integration to take place, although that in itself might be seen as progressive trend as it is sometimes argued that multiplicity of feature brings about dynamism. The issue of internal difference and fragmentation has yet to be dealt with seriously by Muslims themselves rather they often play on the blame-shifting game. Apparently, unity among Muslims in Europe either they want it or not is necessary for their prosperity. French President Nicolas Sarkozy, at the time of heading the interior ministry was renowned for his conservativeness on matters of immigration, yet the unity of Muslims appears pertinent to him. Sarkozy though hated by the Africans and Arabs for his harsh comments and conservative view about immigration, yet he should be patted for floating and realizing the initiative for a nationwide ‘Council of Muslim leaders’ and his proposal for an affirmative action and state funding for mosques, ideas that may resurface as he is now French president. Such engagement of Sarkozy nevertheless boosted his political stamina among some minorities.⁵⁷

Arguably Europeans have also exploited the gulf of disunity among the Muslim community, since there cease to be a united Muslim front, as sometimes ethnocentric project surfacing while the sense of togetherness becomes a dream. Nevertheless, Muslims have made remarkable informal political effort country-wise, yet the dearth of leadership and sense of unity could not synthesize and crystallize this informality into a formal effort. British Muslims among other European counterparts have remarkably done so well informally expressing their political impulse. In the recent times, Muslim Council of Britain alleged with radical George Galloway in order to channel their path.

⁵⁷ *APS News*, “Sarkozy has pushed hard to realize dream,” (April 22, 2007)

Muslim groups in Britain have organized dozens of political organizations, many of which claim to speak for the Muslim community, but given the internal division among Muslims, it has been difficult for any one of these groups to become an effective national group.⁵⁸

Nonetheless, it would be misleading to fence out some ground reality happening within the Muslim European communities. The proliferation of Muslim groupings in Britain and France are indication that Muslims are striving towards making an impact within the society. No doubt these organizations or different associations have spurred the establishment of Muslim worship centre (Mosques) though in many European countries like Italy, Germany, Poland, and Greece to name a few they are still confronted with hardliners who see the minaret as anti-Christian Europe. Centres like halal abattoirs, schools, cemetery, and chapels for prison inmates are all markers to the fact that progress is underway.

The blame of inner fragmentation might of course be shouldered on Muslims on one hand, yet the larger society equally is of course not exculpable. Many of these Muslim organizations often have problem to assert themselves because of local laws therefore are forced to seek the help of native non-Muslims. Sometimes as they solicit help outside the host country particularly from country of origin or other Muslim countries. This has always been the case in Germany where Turkish Muslims turn to Turkey for help. In the wake of 9/11 and other events in Europe, such avenue became

⁵⁸ Joel S. Fetzer and Christopher Soper, *Muslims and the State in Britain, France, and Germany*, (Cambridge University Press, 2004) 8-9

questionable and was forfeited as humanitarian help outside Europe and North America is often observed from the lens of terrorism.⁵⁹

2.2.3 Are We Unwanted

The issue of integration and marginalization purportedly believe to be facing Muslims in Europe is not a Muslim thing it is rather a common phenomenon among ethnic minority in any foreign country. However Muslims have taken their own side much more prominent in view of the cultural and religious definition to life as understood by Islam. One should not shy away from the truth that at the beginning of the Irish migration to North America they were coldly welcomed even though they share same complexion with the Americans yet many Irish saw marginalization has the growing trend. Prior to be an immigration country, Italy in the late 50s and early 60s was part of the emigration countries; Italians during that period sojourned abroad and were faced with similar issue of marginalization.⁶⁰

It is high time a new bearing is shaped out for the future of Muslims in Europe and right time for Muslims to take leaves from the legacy of other migrants who at one time or the other were faced with similar circumstance. It is hard truth to accept yet Muslims must survive in their new homes, the success of such objective will depend on the application of intuitive and prudence approach.

In an article presented to a European committee, Professor Lars Dencik from Roskilde University assessed '*Jewish life in Sweden*', as an attempt to create a model for Muslims living in Europe particularly in Sweden. Lars obviously does not claim to be an

⁵⁹ Buijs J. Frank and Jan Rath, "Muslims in Europe: The State of Research" *Russell Sage Foundation*, (New York: October 2002)

⁶⁰ Grete Brochmann and Tomas Hammar, *Mechanisms of immigration control: A comparative analysis of European regulation policies*, ed. (New York: 2001)

Islamic studies expert hence does not project the view of submitting an answer to the issue of Muslims in Sweden. Rather she was of the view that Jewish recognition within the mainstream of the Swedish society was affected by certain laws. According to her, the Jewish society in Sweden is 1.7% of the whole population, whose arrival in Sweden dated back to 1770s under the king protection. Her latter observation pertinent to Muslims lies in her four categorizations (marginalization, segregation, assimilation and integration) of Swedish Jews. Sweden refused to recognise the presence of the Jews not until they passed through all the four stages, thereafter they were recognised as one of the ethnic minorities and an integral part of the Swedish society.⁶¹ The crux of her argument is that the Swedish Jews became recognised by the state after a long traumatic process. Lars tacit insinuation is that Muslims like the Jews had to conform to the demand of the society which of course avail them the opportunity to secure the status of ethnic minority. In Sweden, ethnic minority is granted after a protracted process mentioned above, Jews were identified as ethnic minority based on the fact that Swedish Jews share certain ethno-cultural value with the larger society.

On this background, it is possible to deduce that the status was accorded to the Jews simply because of Jews accommodative temperament and less religious propensity. However, taking the Swedish scenario as indicator of generalization for the whole Europe might be inadequately. The recognition of an ethnic minority goes with two indicators (accommodative temperament and less religious propensity) the latter indicators will not be appealing to a large European Muslims as Muslims give cultural and religious definition to life as understood by Islam wherever they are. Certain Muslim migrant

⁶¹ Lars Dencik, "Jewish Life in Sweden: Cultural Autonomy and Social Integration," in a final report of *Islam, citizenship and the dynamics of European integration*, August, 31 2003

community believe Europeans do not appreciate their presence and victimized. They argue Europe should come to term with their presence as European economy cannot discard the contribution and impact of foreign workers for its development. One, the European population cannot sustain or meet the demand of labour as many native Europeans are swinging off the track of marital life so much that it has contributed to the low population growth in Europe. Secondly, certain menial jobs do not appeal to Europeans and foreigners seeking greener pasture are readily available to shoulder the task. Thirdly, the booming European economy needs experts thus that justify the mantra of some European officials saying their countries will only welcome legal and professional immigrants. On this platform an agreement could be reach with the view of Nicolas Sarkozy that 'is not that we don't want immigrants but we are interested in skilled and legal workers'. That complement the fact that Muslims are always welcomed so far they are skilled and legal.

Philip Lewis argues that the picture of victimization delineated by Muslims as facing them became accentuated in the post 9/11. To him Muslims have somewhat failed to take self criticism of themselves rather preoccupied in emphasizing Islamophobia, racism and social exclusion. Yet he pointed out the embraced effort of newly educated Muslims depicting the social proscribed behaviours among Muslim youth. Deductively his argument emphasizes self assessment rather than blame shifting, and ability to avail what other minorities have achieved through prudence.⁶²

⁶² Philip. Lewis, "Beyond Victimhood-From the global to the local: A British case-study." paper presented in a final report of *Islam, citizenship and the dynamics of European integration* at the conference of European Muslims and the Secular State in a Comparative Perspective, (June 30 and July 1 2003)

2.2.4 Education

Immigrants came to Europe from various sections of the world, people from the developing continents of Africa, Asia and Latin America. This assertion of course was shared by Gunnar Malmberg when analysing *Time and Space in International Migration*.⁶³ Obviously, these migrants carried with them different cultural socio-religious and political beliefs characterising their identity.

Like every immigrant seeking solace in a foreign country, harbouring the view of a new dawn, upon getting to Europe in search of greener pasture, Muslims were faced with identity dilemma, preserving their Islamic heritage or assimilating into the mainstream of the host countries. This social predicament was both enhanced by the host countries' laws and Muslim obstinate position. Muslims were caught in the web of integration dilemma, a critical decision that either demand assimilation or rejection of the status quo. Living in ghettos or secluded part of the host country is the peculiarity syndrome among many migrants.

This island existence gives the assurance that their religious rite, rituals, and cultural heritage will be observed and preserved within their locality, thus making them safer from the watchful eyes and predatory larger host culture. The fear of being consumed by the host culture made most of the Muslims to seek for alternatives schooling wherein their history, culture, language could be preserved.

That's changed. Now girls in Spain and France are going to court
to uphold their right to cover their heads in school, while the

⁶³ Gunnar Malmberg, "Time and Space in International Migration" in *International Migration, Immobility and Development: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, Tomas Hammar, (Berg Publishers, 1997)

Arab European League in Belgium is demanding bilingual education for kids who speak Arabic at home.⁶⁴

Since education is the easiest apparatus to effect a change and maintain status quo, Muslims for the sake of their identity came up with their own schools. For instance according to the Association of Muslim Schools UK, there are now over 120 full-time Muslim schools in the UK. Over 70 schools of these schools are currently benefiting from being AMSUK members.⁶⁵ Unlike in Britain less significant Muslim schools are visible in other parts of Europe. However, one must not lose the sight of scattered theological centres like (Human Sciences (IESH) theological college in France) across the continent attempting to breed European Muslims, Imams and scholars having European identity.

These schools cater for both religious and cultural knowledge, as many believe their children would soonest become consumed by the larger cultural value if not educated in their own fashion. Having understood the complication and necessity to get the immigrants into the mainstream, few governments such as the French and German came up with the plan of linguistic integration.

Unlike British relaxed and relatively flexible system, the German and French system adamantly attach great importance to the local languages, a compulsory necessity in the school system and one of the factors that show immigrants are really ready for integration.

⁶⁴ Guilherme D. Pires and John Stanton, "Ethnic Marketing: Accepting the Challenge of Cultural Diversity" *Cengage Learning EMEA*, 2005

⁶⁵ *Report of Mayor of London*, "Muslim in London" <http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/publications/equalities/muslims-in-london.pdf> (October 2006)

The reasons for founding Islamic schools are twofold: parents feel insecure about the Islamic development of their wards as public schools have no room for Islamic religious knowledge. Similarly, parents would like to see their children as preserver of their cultural and traditional heritage and for higher school achievement, since most the schools place no importance for minority cultural and traditional values.

This evidently shows that Islamic identity still haunt Muslims and such search for an identity as in separate Islamic schooling system further isolate the Muslim community from the mainstream. This has been the position of some ethnocentric Europeans that such will lead to isolation and segregation instead of integration. The latter argues that such schools are more or less religious and ideologically grounded, and more likely to give western values little or no importance and ultimately bring about reduction of students from public schools

The academic disparity between Muslims and other minorities in Europe tells a lot of their social status. Muslims are of lower educational profile in Europe a distinctive feature between Muslims from the two sides of the Atlantic. American Muslims obviously shoulders greater academic profile possibly because most migrants to the States are often better educated from their home countries before migrating to the States. Unlike the latter, European Muslim migrants are still wanting academically. More importantly since there is no formal government policy which deprives Muslims from the educational sector hence I do believe education should be employed as tool to effect a change. The educational friendly atmosphere of different European countries should be explored and annexed optimally. Democracy in the west is said to have flourished due to formidable academic excellence and that is one pinpoint often emphasized by western

observers as missing in Muslim societies, acting as roadblock to good governance and smooth operation of democracy.

But the question that puzzles the mind is that why this lackadaisical attitude to education. How plausible would one agree with the assertion that numerous Muslim communities across Europe lacks the aptitude of knowing the essence and benefit of education? Perhaps there would be more explanation to that. Account and research shows that social dislocation is one answer to this critical issue. But such an answer itself is insufficient without tracing out the root cause of social dislocation. In view of the report of Sir Iqbal Sacranie, social dislocation is as a result of tendency towards cultural preservation, sense of belonging, ghettoization, and economic incapability to avail modern urban infrastructures.⁶⁶ Iqbal's report although was a case study for the British society which might either be true or not for other societies in Europe. However, it does give a similar equation for the situation in France. This brings forth the 'resource theoretical framework' with which Muslims in Europe can be well comprehended. This framework expounds why Muslims are falling short of better education, housing facility, sound autonomous political participation and economic venture. The resource dilemma of Muslims was further expatiated by the report of Mr. Iqbal Sacranie whose report observed that Muslims are the less educated ethnic group in Europe particularly in Britain, living homogenous and with limited economic viability.

Muslims are the most marginalized and deprived group in Britain but that "indulging in self-pity is not a trait of the Muslim community."⁶⁷

⁶⁶ *Guardian*, "Sir Iqbal Sacranie's Report," 2005

⁶⁷ *Ibid*

In spite of the hurdles Muslims might claim to be facing in Britain they are still better off than others in several European societies. Britain has attempted to follow the track of multicultural society spearheaded by The Netherlands although Amsterdam multiculturalism is now being questioned. The British society evidently permits its Muslim community like every other ethnic or religious minority, a separate schooling system, administered by Muslims and having both religious and cultural values of Islam as mentioned above. Such propensity towards having ethnic, religious and culturally guided schools is yet to take a strong footing in France, though some institutions might be operating but with limited scope as compared to Britain. The French secular structural system accounts for that as a separate Muslims school tailored in Islamic direction is seen conflicting with secularism. The headscarf issue in France is one of those examples that explicitly speak of how Islamic guided schools cannot really get a footing in the French schooling system.

Borrowing from the statistic and well documented data of Caitlin Killian (2003) one discovers that the headscarf issue in France produced mixed reactions among the people, particularly among Muslim immigrants in France. The fact of the data is that appreciable amount of the respondents see the issue contravening the open society claimed by France.

Respondents' Response by Age and Education

Response	High School or Less			More Than High School		
	Younger Than 40 (n = 6)	Older Than 40 (n = 14)	Total (n = 20)	Younger Than 40 Yes (n =16)	Older Than 40 Yes (n =5)	Total Yes (n =21)
Yes (n =16)						
No problem	3	4	7	1	0	1
Rights/culture	0	0	0	6	2	8
No (n =12)						
Integrate	0	3	3	2	0	2
Go Home	1	2	3	3	1	4
Other views (n = 37)						
Racism	1	0	1	7	0	7
Lost opportunities	0	0	0	1	1	2
Identity	0	1	1	4	0	4
Forced	0	0	0	2	1	3
Fundamentalism	1	0	1	5	2	7
Not required in Islam	2	8	10	1	0	1

Caitlin Killian: 2003)⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Caitlin Killian, “*The Other Side of the Veil: North African Women in France Respond to the Headscarf Affair*” *Gender and Society*, Vol. 17, No 4, August (2003)

The Italian constitution obviously states that educational opportunity is open to all regardless of the culture or ethnicity, hence making education a vital necessity for both foreign and native Italians. However the level of drop-out among children of immigrants and their inaccessibility to educational institutions put to question the constitutionality of education for all. According to the report of open society institute (2002) language problems, poverty, and an insufficiently inter-cultural environment highly inform the failure and poor performance of Muslim children in the scholastic achievement.

The same report equally pointed out that there is less progress to integrate the educational and cultural demand of immigrant children into the larger school curricula. This is partly due to the stronghold of the Catholicism in the school system, even though Italy like every other European country claims secularism, where religion has got nothing doing with governmental or societal institutions like the school. The report also highlight through interview conducted that immigrant religious knowledge is lacking in the Italian schools and even when they are taught, it is disseminate wrongly and distorted.⁶⁹

Research however indicates that children of Muslim immigrants share same plight with other immigrants in Italy in terms of educational achievements. Immigrant children are yet to receive a comprehensive and adequate attention from the government towards integrating them into the mainstream educational system. However this should not drives us to the conclusion that Muslims like every other immigrants lack education in Italy. In most places where Muslims have taken footing, Islamic institutes where Qur'anic and traditional Islamic education is impacted are on the rise. Some of these Islamic schools

⁶⁹ *Open Society Institute Report*, "The Situation of Muslims in Italy," 2002

try bridging the gap that exist in most public schools by integrating Italian and country of origin scholastic programmes, and as a medium of help for immigrants children that could not meet standard of the public school.⁷⁰

Such academic deficiency among immigrants generally and Muslim in particular can better explain the reason why this group of people in Italy lack better employment. All of these simply indicate that the gap of integration would remain widened without government taking a drastic position to nail the issue. The economic status of Muslims in Italy cannot be disconnected from such above discussed problems as the children of well-to-do Muslims from Western Europe residing in Italy are doing well and on same academic level like their fellow native Italians in the academic institutions.⁷¹

The Italian system seems quite distinctive in its nature as it gives recognition to ethnic minorities and religious groups. Different religious groups have gained state recognition at different point in history and that has facilitated good rapport between the state and these religious groups. Obviously, the Muslim community is yet to attain such recognition, proof to why they still contend with many problems. In this backdrop Roggero argues (2002) that the various activities of Muslims recently in Italy are steps towards making the government feel their existence and for that matter establish their presence which will open up opportunities enjoyed by other cultural and religious groups in Italy.⁷²

Spain since 1978 has been operating secular state constitution but the ground reality is that the Catholic Church has been quite influential in the public schooling

⁷⁰ Adele M. Roggero, "Muslims in Italy" In *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, ed. by Y.Y Haddad, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002)

⁷¹ *Open Society Institute Report*, "The Situation of Muslims in Italy," 2002

⁷² Adele M. Roggero, "Muslims in Italy" In *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*,

system. Of course it would be hard to avoid such church predominance as Spain is a Catholic country with about 76% adherents of the Catholic Church. In fact it is in this background that the report of religion freedom (2000) noted that in spite of state claim of secularism, Catholicism as the predominant religion “enjoys the closest official relationship with the government as well as the most benefits, including financing through the tax system. The government supports the Catholic Church with an amount close to \$1 million annually. Jews, Muslims, and Protestants also have official status but enjoy fewer privileges.”⁷³

The support of the government for the Catholic Church and its influence in the schooling system apparently tells that religious studies exist in Spain. But such religious studies have principally been geared towards Catholic teaching, hence with little or no attention given to other religious teachings. The fact that Islam is the second largest religion in Spain also gives the expression that children of Muslim immigrants would be wanting if the school curriculum is principally dominated by the Catholic teaching.

Muslim like every other religion denominations in Spain do not really enjoy as much facility provided by the government to the Catholic. However in view of the growing Muslim communities both immigrant and native Spanish, the demand of having Islamic curriculum in the mainstream schools has become profound. Shireen and Charles (2002) were of the view that situation changed when in March 1999 the ministry of education entered into agreement with Muslim representatives in order to amicably see how Muslim concern can be put to rest. At the start it was hard to reach consensus

⁷³ *Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour U.S. Department of State*, “Annual Report on International Religious Freedom: Spain,” (September 5, 2000)

between the Muslim representatives and the government ministry as the ministry could not afford to place Islamic teaching side by side along other religious teaching in the public school and the modality of funding the studies was also an issue.⁷⁴

The obstacle to have Islamic teaching in the public was not just a government thing, but the curriculum crisis between the Spanish Islamic Commission and Federation of Islamic Associations was equally acute. The former wanted the curriculum to address Islamic teaching as strictly a religious studies professing Islam as a belief system without any historical dimension. The latter on the other hand prefers the teaching of Islam with Islamic historical knowledge, philosophy and being open to non-Muslims, and not being limited to rites and religious principles. By and large suggestion from both sides came to be considered. Nevertheless, non availability of teaching materials, staffs and funds further exacerbated the contentious issue of teaching Islam in Spanish public school.⁷⁵

Muslims still feel some hindrances to having equal right in expressing their religious rights in the school. This can be associated with restrictions on freedom of religion in Spain which in a way is not limited to the Muslim community. According to the Religious Freedom Report (2000) a senior Muslim leader in 1999 “30 Muslim girls in Granada were required to remove their veils for their national identity card photos; Catholic nuns are not required to remove their head coverings for their identity card photos.”⁷⁶ This however does not necessarily mean Muslims are the target of the government or neglected. Going by Religious Freedom Report (2003) Federation of Islamic Associations (FEERI) pointed out that “government has been very supportive of

⁷⁴ Shireen Hunter and Charles Buchanan, “Islam, Europe’s Second Religion: The new social, cultural and political landscape.” (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002)

⁷⁵ Ibid

⁷⁶ *Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour U.S. Department of State*, “Annual Report on International Religious Freedom: Spain,” September 5, 2000

female Muslim students who face problems with school dress codes because of their use of headscarves. The Government has consistently held that the right of education takes priority over the enforcement of clothing regulations.”⁷⁷

I believe this is where European governments have to come in and remedy the situation, believing that Muslims would integrate or be appeased by the societal culture under the canopy of dislocation is a dream. It is high time to wake up to the fact that these migrants are part of the society, if politicians on two ways can depend on Muslims votes and as well pound on them, speak of the fact that they are recognizable entity of the society worthy of attention. Introspectively, if serious educational opportunity is accorded to Muslims that could be a path towards integration and familiarization with European ethos. Thus, rightwing politicians and governments can allay themselves of the fear that Muslims are the European troublemakers defying host cultural values.

2.2.5 Dilemma of Homogeneity

If homogeneity and ghettoization are among factors roadblocking Muslims integration then the concepts of ‘migration and movement (hijrah and khuruj) should remedy this situation. Development often takes place as a result of ‘hijrah’ as documented in Islamic history. An obstinate inclination to ones settlement does not always define a difference, perhaps moving out from one’s shell is another option worthy of consideration. Islam is not an isolated religion or creed but its universality and sociability was its impressive potential for its spread across the world within a short

⁷⁷ *Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour U.S. Department of State*, “Annual Report on International Religious Freedom: Spain,” September 5, 2003

period of time. If the earliest Islamic travellers and missionaries were of the fear or had harboured the indignation of being saturated by others culture, Islam would have neither stepped out of Medina nor see the far-flung region of Africa.

Being oneself or preserving one's culture necessarily does not require distancing from others. European Muslims can better explain the ethos of Islam to the natives through the channel of interaction but that would cease to surface without hijrah from their shell. It becomes suffice at this point that the concept of hijrah traditionally depicts migration from 'evil to good' or migration from one place to another. But it has become imperative that the other side of the coin of 'hijrah' can also be employed in the European context. Khuruj, (moving out) is the other side of the coin which was employed by the Muslims after the establishment of Islamic state in the city of Medinah. Had the earliest Muslims remain in Medinah Islam would have remained the faith of Medinah not a universal faith as seen today. The effort lies with European Muslims to see themselves as ambassadors of Islam in the continent not as troublemakers, nonconformists, and rebels but can always portray Islam and Islamic culture with accommodative sensibility within their given societies. The age-old stereotyped situation which Europeans have lived with for a long time must be diffused, but that would cease impracticable if restriction within one's shell persist. Thus, taking full confidence out from the ghetto, attempting to be heterogeneous is a path towards serious integration.

Educational infrastructure can better facilitate political socialization and cultural integration worthy in making a European Muslims, based on those values and criteria in developing an ethnic minority. On this note, if we take education as gateway for political participation, there would be little or no justification to be dismayed by Muslims political

profile in the European context. To create a link between education and political participation is no myth but a further exegesis to the understanding of integration. We must not fence the fact that politics in today's world is resource oriented. In this way, people taking themselves as minority, marginalized, economically in-viable, educationally dislocated, to what extent would they be able to muster strength with affluent political figures in Europe. Political marginalization can strictly be associated with economic inequity

Muslim groups have been politically ineffective because they lack the resources necessary to bargain effectively with the state.⁷⁸

This 'resource theoretical framework' puts forward the argument that rather than Muslims having a united front in the political terrain they rather participate through conventional political channels. They offer their votes to existing political parties with the hope that their demands and aspirations would be given attention. More importantly, these parties exploit their resource deficiency to get their votes in order to compete and challenge other conventional parties.⁷⁹ Although lamenting from the security standpoint, the US state department expressed its resentment towards the marginalization and integration problem faced by European Muslims. Minority deprived of economic right would always fume anger and trouble making, violence and ultimately terrorism.

US state department's undersecretary for European affairs Daniel

Fried mentioned unemployment, discrimination and lack of

⁷⁸ Joel, S. Fetzer. Christopher, J. Soper., *Muslims and the State in Britain, France, and Germany*, (Cambridge University Press, 2004) 8

⁷⁹ Ibid p 12

integration among Europe's Muslim communities had created an "audience" open to extremist messages.⁸⁰

2.3. Nature of relations between Muslim migrants and the host Countries

Broadly speaking the nature of relations between the Muslim migrants and the host countries have always been a silent-warm and oscillated relations. Since the arrival of Muslims on the continent there has always been cultural preservation from the newcomers who see themselves as minors from the larger European cultural set-up. The first generation of Muslims obviously do not represent themselves explicitly with religious symbol rather were more concern of their economic pursuit. In Britain they were grossly concern about their work in the factories and how to make ends meet and at the end remit money back to their family at home. Similarly the first generation of French North African immigrants obviously were either illiterate or semiliterate taking little consideration for religious exposition, particularly such individualistic religious leaning characterized the Algerian immigrants, a distinction from Moroccan migrants who are relatively religious. The case was not different from the guest workers in Germany whose greater attention focused on economic benefit more than religion or having other explicit social engagements.

The cultural centric nature of Spain and Italy speaks lot of these countries and one would not expect the Muslim immigrants to have any either strong cultural or religious representation during their early days of arrival in these countries.

The whole scenario changed as the second generation of immigrants emerged. Obviously those children born in Europe by immigrant parents became culturally

⁸⁰ Küchler, *EU Observer*, April 06, 2006

conscious of the host society than their parents who have long maintained a silent relation with the host society. The fact that the new generations have to socialise with their immediate societies became a serious concern. On one hand the parents (first generation) nurture the fear that their children might be devour by the culture of the host society thus forgetting theirs traditional values. Such fear outrightly was not a false alarm but was true so certain extent. The other concern was that of the youth (second and third generation) who are the main players grappling to respect their parents traditional value and at the same time socializing and getting fitted into the larger society. Such dilemma was sometimes reinforced during socialization process in the school and other public space.

By and large the host society was forced to recognise the presence of the immigrant community by taking into consideration their needs that could pave way for integration. In the different European societies under study different approaches was employed to give the immigrant community some amount of sense of belonging. In all of these countries, Britain obviously stands out in greater social benefit to its immigrant community as it attempted to put into practice a multicultural society following the Dutch causeway. France in fact was more conservative than the rest countries seeing itself as the heart of European secularism hence it is for the immigrants to decide either to assimilate with the French system or remain isolated. Germany went through a relatively conservative yet lenient position towards these immigrants by honouring some of their cultural and religious demand. In fact Gerdien Jonker of the University of Muenster Germany noted that the relations between the Germany's Muslim community and the German larger society went through three stages.⁸¹

⁸¹ Gerdien Jonker, "Communication in Conflict: Germany and the Muslim Other in the Aftermath of 9/11," in the final report of *Islam, citizenship and the dynamics of European integration*, at the

The non existence of ethnic minority in Italy and strict opposition to any conspicuous Muslim venture in Spain are factors that inform and better explain the nature of relations in these countries. Both of these countries are predominantly Catholic societies wherein the Church remains a leading influential figure having cultural and socialization role-play, though these countries claim being secular. Jocelyne Cesari captures the picture rightly in view of the local and national influence of the Catholic Church in both Spain and Italy.⁸²

Continental Europe has long been protective of alien and such propensity never gave full opportunity to Europe to deal adequately with the influx of immigrants. Hence in a matter of years due to the long stay of these immigrants and their social implication, European nations had to develop an integration policy for these immigrants.⁸³

The relationship decades back was not that coercive or explicit discriminatory as headlines read nowadays, rather it has always be silent-accommodating-co-existence though some immigrants feel somewhat uncomfortable in certain respect.

9/11, 7/7, Madrid train blast and various others opened the Pandora box and the relational issues that have been silently addressed suddenly became a politicised, cultural and social matter which draws wide rage views from scholars, layman, media and the likes.

conference of European Muslims and the Secular State in a Comparative Perspective, (30 June-1 July 2003)

⁸² Jocelyne Cesari, "Mosque Conflicts in European Cities: Introduction," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 31, No 6, (November 2005)

⁸³ Schnapper Dominique, "La France de l'integration: Sociologie de la nation." *Contemporary Sociology* Vol. 4, (January 1994)

Chapter 3

3.1. 9/11 and other similar Events, impact on European Muslims

The event of September 11, 2001 took the world by surprise moving beyond the imaginative expectation of the motion pictures acted in the Hollywood, a different cinematic experience yet to be understood and explained in its true sense. It would be mincing of word to dispute or try dismiss the fact that 9/11 drew line which the cold war failed to draw. It was a new historical experience that recent generation will live to narrate to the coming generation. The attack on USA homeland drew warm support for the United States against the perpetrators of the act. No doubt 9/11 opened a new historical page and gave new bearing to world politics

Since Muslims are closely related to the event of 9/11 in view of the fact that the perpetrators were linked to the religion of Islam and shouldered with the blame of proliferation, abetting, and engineering strategies for terrorism. This of course places Islam and Muslims in a critical position. Hence the whole war on terrorism obviously gave Muslims focal position as they have been hunted and castigated as terrorists.

The aftermath of 9/11 on American Muslim remains a lingering issue haunting the American Muslim community, although the tide to certain extent has submerged. 9/11 consequence was not shouldered alone by the American Muslims but their European counterpart had to bear the cross and cold-reaction of 9/11. It obviously sent a signal to European governments of their Muslim community particularly when most of the names mentioned were European bred Muslims. The challenges of integration were further broaden and expectation of closing the gap of understanding became unthinkable.

The woes of Muslim in Europe was aggravated when the London bombing and the Madrid train blast occurred. It quickly became the representation of 9/11 on European soil. Never would anyone expect that after such terrific incident of 9/11 same would repeat itself elsewhere, it was never anticipated that 9/11 was ominous and the beginning of the unexpected.

The dawn of 7/7 in the heart of London shocked the imagination of the multicultural British society and sent cold-gripping effect across Europe. More shocking effect and introspective understanding of the lurking threat heightens by the dawn of Madrid train blast. These two events produced the fruit of hatred towards Muslims. It quickly aroused the concern of European governments more about the Muslim community in Europe. Europe became gripped by the Islamophobia punctured by the power of the media. Even if Muslims have shared the same fate as being minority in Europe with many other ethnic minorities, the terrorist attacks broke that commonality and an overwhelming attention was shifted solely on Muslims.

7/7 was apparently condemned all across Europe and it became a rallying ground for solidarity for Britain and at the same time an eye-opener for other countries. Going by the report of EUMC (2005) “with the attacks there was a temporary and disturbing increase in faith related hate crimes across the UK.....this made minority groups and particularly British Muslims feel vulnerable and fear for their safety.”⁸⁴

The attacks further accentuate the question of integration in view of measuring the readiness of Muslim to assimilate with the value of their society. Perhaps the attack became a template for some to invalidate the claim of Muslims of being part of the larger

⁸⁴ *The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia Report (EUMC)*, “The impact of 7 July 2005 London bomb attacks on Muslim communities in the EU,” November 2005

European society. The fact of the matter is that the attackers never considered their victims regardless of their faith, culture, political or social standing. Although being marginalized should not be a yardstick for committing unruly act of blowing up commuter trains as Kepel (2006) identified that disparity of opportunities and the perceived wrong policies of both US and some Europeans in the Middle East helped fanned such animosity towards the host European society.⁸⁵

In fact Gerdien Jonker (2003) noted that these attacks particularly 9/11 made Europeans more challenging on Muslim related issues. He cited the interview with Ernst Pulsfort, Spiritual Rector of the Catholic Academy in Berlin wherein the latter mentioned that the newest latency was an open antagonism to Islam and its scripture.⁸⁶ The reaction to 9/11 transcended the analysis of religious scholars as the issue of Islam and Muslims in Europe turned out becoming conference issue, receiving all sort of discourses and polemics among European intellectual, columnist and opinion makers alike.

In Germany the Church before 9/11 had always been involved in warm and cordial public debate with the Muslim community, but such speechless co-existence, dialogue enterprise and progressive relations was ruined by the attack on the United States. It led many social worker Muslims into the shell of protection and security consciousness owing to the mounting aggressiveness among youngsters.

Meanwhile the event coincidentally brought forth the silent Muslim presence to a more reckonable status, a distinction that has earlier characterised the first generation. Though Muslim youth across German had to face the tune by being arrested yet it paved

⁸⁵ Gilles Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West*, (Belknap Press, 2006)

⁸⁶ Gerdien Jonker, "Communication in Conflict: Germany and the Muslims Other in the Aftermath of 9/11." in a final report of *Islam, citizenship and the dynamics of European integration* at the conference of European Muslims and the Secular State in a Comparative Perspective, (June 30 and July 1 2003)

way for others to really tell the public their understanding of Islam and how accommodating it is to the German value system.⁸⁷

With the dawn of 7/7 and other similar events some western politicians and academics began viewing Islam as essentially non-liberal, non-democratic and anti-western. These views were further resonated by the media and extended its tentacles to the ordinary masses doorsteps. Hence historical tensions between Islam and Christianity that were long rested in history book were dusted out from different archives in bid to demarcate the cultural disparity between the western society and the Muslim immigrants. Of course the mantra became that of discriminating rhythm played against the European Muslims so much that daily headlines runs vitriolic attack as newspapers would only gain much readership if topped by Muslim related issues.⁸⁸

Obviously to underestimate the gravity of 7/7 on Londoners would be missing the point. Muslims in London have to pay for and face the aftermath of the incident which killed about 52 persons and made an estimate of 700 or more severely wounded. The hate crime garnished with faith sentiments that followed the event became unprecedented for security officers in the heart of UK. According to the BBC, there were 269 religious hate crimes in the three weeks after 7 July, compared with 40 in the same period of 2004.⁸⁹

The Muslim community in Britain turned out defensive trying to clear the wind from a generic labeling of all Muslims as terrorists or evil perpetrators. The British Muslim Council (MCB) and Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) ran several programmes to enlighten the public about the message of Islam as a peaceful religion exculpable from

⁸⁷ Ibid

⁸⁸ Al-Sayyad, Nezar and Manuel, Castells, *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam: Politics Culture and citizenship in the age of globalization* ed. (Berkeley: University of California, 2002)

⁸⁹ BBC News, "Hate crimes soar after bombings," August 4, 2005

such act of violence witnessed on 7/7. In spite the welcoming effort of the Muslim community to distance themselves from wrongful allegation and representation the hate crimes garnished with religious sentiment was recorded high. The London security offices along with the Home Office were quite instrumental in complementing the effort of the Muslim community trying to diffuse the tension that made many Muslims nostalgic. Nevertheless, the EUMC noted that the overall total for hate crimes in London has increased by five percent since the events of 7 and 21 July.⁹⁰

In fact Muslims alone did not shoulder the consequences of 7/7, since security officials got engaged in the fight against terrorism, extremism and hate crimes, Tarique Ghaffur the assistant police commissioner of London revealed that the specialist unit dealing with serious and organised crime had lost 10% of its staff to the bombings inquiry. The situation warranted more engagement leading the London Metropolitan Police to shuffle between 300 and 473 of Specialist Crime Directorate detectives after the 7 July 2005 incident.

As the trend of hate and faith related crime increases, Tarique Ghaffur noted that "It can lead to these communities completely retreating and not engaging at a time when we want their engagement and support" Meanwhile Metropolitan Commissioner Sir Ian Blair revealed the anti-terrorism investigations were costing £500,000 a day.⁹¹

⁹⁰ *The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia Report (EUMC)*, "The impact of 7 July 2005 London bomb attacks on Muslim communities in the EU," (November 2005)

⁹¹ *BBC News*, "Hate crimes soar after bombings," (August 4, 2005)

Date	Faith Hate 2004	Faith Hate 2005	Hate Crime 2004	Hate Crime 2005
w/c 30/05	9	15	379	325
w/c 06/06	13	19	418	318
w/c 13/06	10	21	337	323
w/c 20/06	14	16	334	370
w/c 27/06	8	15	326	329
w/c 04/07	11	68	357	350
w/c 11/07	22	92	367	506
w/c 18/07	20	67	391	447
w/c 25/07	19	79	398	419
w/c 01/08	7	60	357	399
w/c 08/08	9	35	426	372
w/c 15/08	10	28	353	370
w/c 22/08	6	21	333	288
w/c 29/08	8	19	325	325
w/c 05/09	23	17	345	329
w/c 12/09	10	19	303	305
w/c 19/09	14	14	310	309
w/c 26/09	7	22	301	319
w/c 03/10	10	30	298	289
w/c 10/10	12	20	278	333

EUMC Report on Faith and Hate Crime in London following 7/7 ⁹²

⁹² *The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia Report (EUMC)*, "The impact of 7 July 2005 London bomb attacks on Muslim communities in the EU," (November 2005)

The London bombing had serious consequences on Muslims in different European countries. The major trend in these countries was the re-visitation of the issue of immigration as most suspects were accused of immigration problem. Muslims places of worship, shopping centres and homes were frequently ransacked with the hope of identifying the bad eggs and purging them out of the country. According to the report of EUMC the Italian security agents identified “32,703 people, 141 arrested, and expulsion procedures were initiated for 701 people who were charged with unauthorized stay or failure to obey a previous expulsion order or illegal use of the stay permit”....only two of the 141 arrests were in connection with the anti-terrorism measures adopted in July.” In spite the random harassments and arrests Giuseppe Pisanu the Italian Interior Minister made effort to shield Islam and Muslims from wrongful labeling. Giuseppe denies the fact that the bombing does not necessarily insinuate the clash of civilizations between the west and the Islamic world.⁹³

In France the Muslim community and its associations equally expressed their resentment towards the attack; however the government reaction was more in consolidation and inline with measures taken by other European countries to strengthening security, placing surveillance on the Muslim community and to further tighten immigration law on immigrants within the country and for prospective immigrants particularly from the Muslim countries. Philippe de Villiers, President of the MPF (Mouvement pour la France), however was more sensitive against any form of “progressive Islamisation of French society”. In his view the government must not be lenient with the Muslim community but to re-established border checks and control of the

⁹³ Ibid

mosques.⁹⁴ In fact the case was not that dissimilar in Germany as the ruling coalition CDU/CSU and of the SPD also believes in increasing video surveillance of public spaces, ensuring that all means of communication related to information technology are closely monitored and a joint exchange of intelligence between the police force and intelligence agency. In Spain Muslim community and its organizations have no option than to condemn the attack and issued an Islamic ruling (fatwa) that justification of terrorist act is tantamount to being an enemy of Islam.⁹⁵

The noticeable reactions of Muslim in all of these countries were that of defensive community trying to distinguish and vindicate themselves from the bad folks who have been labeled Muslim terrorists. Of course that would be the most apt response as 7/7 damaged existing process of understanding between the Muslim communities and the host societies. However unlike 9/11 that was more cold-gripping on Muslims across Europe and particularly in the United States, 7/7 had a different mood owing to the fact that many Islamic associations and Muslim opinion makers were fast in condemning the attack in an unequivocal language which of course to certain extent diffused the tension more than expected. Nevertheless, the media in France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK all shared a commonality of urging the security agencies to buckle-up and to ensure the non-repetition of 7/7.

With few exceptions that took balance few of the Muslim communities most sharply questioned the legality of Muslims in the country and their seriousness to become integrated with the European value system. More often than not, the media became instrumental in opening a wider discussion on immigration and integration. The media

⁹⁴ Ibid

⁹⁵ Ibid

dialogues and portrayal of Muslims were taken advantage of by some radical European politicians and locals who have long harboured sentiments against their Muslim communities. The media helped moved the discussion of Islam away from the scholarly forum and conference room down to the ordinary masses, by which the scope of Islamic discourse became popular in the European public space.

The struggle over the public space was exacerbated by these events, as Muslims before the events were still in the transition towards establishing their public presence through the construction of mosques, having halal abattoirs, job opportunity and substantive economic recognition. Taking mosque construction as a case study, most countries became tougher on their stance against the erection of the minaret. Britain although might have allowed the proliferation of mosques as compared to other countries, Italy, Spain and Germany reinforced their resentment. Argument against the construction of mosque such as noise, traffic nuisance, incompatibility with existing urban planning, non-conformity with existing security norms were further reemphasized.⁹⁶ In short the negotiating processes that have been in the pipeline between the Muslim communities and the host societies were rollback by 7/7 and its predecessor (9/11).

It apparently became un-debateable reality that the cultural and ethnic demarcation between the Muslim immigrant community and the host society got broaden either as a result of 9/11 or similar attack on European soil. In fact it further reinstates the view shared among certain European leaders that the civilizational superiority of the west should not be abreast with the Islamic civilization.

⁹⁶ Jocelyne Cesari, "Mosque Conflicts in European Cities: Introduction," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 31, No 6, (November 2005)

The Pope Benedict speech at the University of Regensburg Germany (12, Sept. 2006), entitled “Faith, Reason and the University: Memories and Reflections” was a tacit tuition given by the Pope to the Muslim world in general and European Muslims in specific that reason and tolerance should be an underlining phrase in all faiths.⁹⁷

Europe of course belongs to the Europeans and no one doubt this fact, its modern cultural heritage is as a result of series of developments. From cultural point of view, Europeans are people of certain ethnic groups. Being a member of an ethnic group gives a sense of belonging, psychological attachment and a conceit of cultural superiority. Cultural conceit creates an enemy image of “we and others”, thereby creating cultural gap. This cultural gulf was widened by the both London and Madrid incidents

According to Rorty, there is no super-cultural platform from which we interact with other cultures. It is not possible for people to leap outside their culture when they encounter another culture; hence a kind of an unavoidable ethnocentrism.⁹⁸ On this template the ethnocentric instinct of Europeans was awoken by these events enhancing the host societies not to condone the presence, and the spread of ‘others’ cultural value particularly when that ‘other’ culture is failing to submit itself to the super cultural value of the majority.

The European society was gripped by the sense of social Darwinism; the application of evolution theory especially the notion of the survival of the fittest, to social situations justifies material inequality. The manifestation of this social disparity became more profound and glaring in European daily lives after the two terrorist acts.

⁹⁷ BBC News, “Key excerpts: The Pope’s speech,” (September 15, 2006)

⁹⁸ Rorty Richard, *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)

Hardly was any European dailies not featuring image or news item relating to arrest, harassment and socio-cultural issue about Muslim on a daily bases. Muslim related issue became the running theme in the media and overarching discourse making the day. Muslim women covering themselves in the public space, youth frequenting mosque regularly became a targeted issue; more often than not rightist politicians exploited the running theme to reinstate their nationalistic message, giving the public more latitude to challenge Muslim activity in the European public space. The Dutch parliament's action was one of these manifestations, the then immigration minister Rita Verdonk noted for her tough immigration stance steered a proposal to ban the use of the veil in the public, which of course got the support of the parliament.

The cabinet finds it undesirable that garments covering the face -- including the burqa -- should be worn in public in view of public order, (and) the security and protection of fellow citizens.⁹⁹

It became obvious that such proposal was premised on security ground and public interaction. Astonishingly according to report less than sixty Muslim women wear the veil in the public out of one million Dutch Muslims; hence it was simply a matter of politics and an expression of 'social Darwinism'. More importantly was the fact that the whole veil issue occurred during the run-up of the Dutch election. Job Cohen, the Labour mayor of Amsterdam, said he opposed burqa in schools and public buildings, and said women wearing one who failed to get a job and should not expect welfare

⁹⁹ *Reuters*, "Dutch to ban wearing of Muslim burqa in public," (November 17, 2006)

benefits.....from the perspective of integration and communication, it is obviously very bad because you can't see each other so the fewer the better,"¹⁰⁰

British Muslims seem not exculpable from such scenario as politicians took advantage of the running theme and the Muslim community was exploited as tool to score political goals. In the UK former foreign Secretary Jack Straw opined that hijab constitutes separatism in the society.

I started this practice I think well over a year ago... because I had observed in the street that, although it's still a tiny minority, more women were wearing the veil and picked up quite considerable concerns about this being a rather visible demonstration of separateness.¹⁰¹

Coincidentally, George Galloway a radical politician of sort known for his outspokenness rejected the stance of Straw during an interview. Galloway rather sees the hijab issue less important as compared to larger societal contentious and contending issues which politicians are yet to address adequately.

It is not women choosing to wear what they want that is sowing division in our society; it is poverty, racism and the despicable competition between the Tory and New Labour frontbenches over who can grab the headlines as the hammer of the Muslims.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

¹⁰¹ *AFP Yahoo News*, "Straw's defence of veil comments fails to defuse row," (October 2006)

¹⁰² "Jack Straw: resign now or be driven out at the election," *Respect the Unity Coalition*, Press release. (October 05 2006)

Who does Jack Straw think he is to tell his female constituents that he would prefer they disrobe before they meet him.....for that is what this amounts to. It is a male politician telling women to wear less.¹⁰³

Subsequently a female teacher was suspended for wearing the veil on the premise that her pupils could not understand what she says in the class. The school position was sparkingly clear that "having a lot of pupils who do not speak English as a first language and you have to be able to see people's lips move when you are being taught.....We asked this young lady to remove her veil when she was teaching English language, but she refused."¹⁰⁴ The veiled teacher in question although argued against that position of her school and pushed her case to the European Human Right Court where the court ruled in her favour, that the school had infringed on her right and she was finally compensated with £1100. In a similar case attributed to hijab, a court judge asked a female lawyer representing her client to remove her veil (hijab). In her response to the judge she said "You are clearly aware of my position on the grounds of my religious beliefs. I won't,"¹⁰⁵

France already has a ban on headscarf in schools and few German schools disapprove of Muslim students coming to school with hijab although constitutional court in Germany sees no constitutional obstacle for a lady teacher wearing the hijab. This explicit judicial stance obviously would be applicable to female students.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Ibid

¹⁰⁴ *BBC News*, "School suspends woman over veil," (October 13, 2006)

¹⁰⁵ *AP News*, "Muslim lawyer refuses to remove veil during hearing in British court," (November 8, 2006)

¹⁰⁶ Armando Salvatore, "Making Public Space: Opportunities and Limits of Collective Action Among Muslims in Europe," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 5, (September 2004)

The aftermath effects of 9/11, 7/7 and Madrid bombing justifies the cultural difference and social Darwinism in European society. It was comprehended by some Muslims as vengeful display by their host society. But such vengeful venture would absolve Muslim of being labelled as intolerant, fundamentalist and extremist. Bobby Sayyid argues in view of Gita Sahgal and Nira Yuval-Davis characterisation of fundamentalism that fundamentalism has three features, a project to control women's bodies, a political practice which rejects pluralism and a movement that purposefully conflates religion and politics as a means of furthering its aims.¹⁰⁷ Hence where will the action of European government be placed within the bracket of this characterisation.

What was seen after 9/11, 7/7 and Madrid bombing places Europe in the bracket of these three characterizations, but the question is would Europeans concur to that reality that responding harshly to these events would be less important, instead to seriously unearth the imperative forces tailoring these youth towards such inhumane acts.

Borrowing from Johan's argument of 'positive peace' that the latter can only be achieved when all stakeholders resolved to understand the causes of a particular conflict, after which they should map out ways of resolving their differences and lastly establish institutions responsible for the preservation and maintenance of that peace.¹⁰⁸

It can be rationalized that the more strict and coercive laws are placed before immigrants; it would apparently brings forth a repugnance situation. Hence living side by side as a multicultural society demands compromise and understanding, yet to be fully

¹⁰⁷ Bobby Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear, Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism*, (London: Zed Books Ltd, 2003) 8

¹⁰⁸ Johan Galtung, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johan_Galtung

implemented in Europe. The fear of others always comes to bear when European laws are made in a bid to contain the spread of growing culture or ethnical value within the European matrix.

3.2. Achievements, Challenges and Prospect of becoming a European Muslim

3.2.1 Issue of Citizenship

One of the challenges facing Muslim in Europe relates to the matter of citizenship. Germany for example has always maintained the principle of *jus sanguinis*, an essential part of its nationality law. Gerard Noiriel observed that such principle places considerable constraint on foreigners' access to citizenship.¹⁰⁹

Citizenship in both Britain and France is quite a different story entirely. The fact remains that both countries colonial policies explains the accessibility to their citizenship right. On one hand, Britain operated indirect-rule, asserted appreciable liberty to the locals regardless of their religion and culture while the French practically employed the assimilation and association rules. In the latter citizenship is only granted after being truly assimilated as a French citizen, although that in itself is restrictive. Britain though might be a little lenient owing to its relatively liberal policy on citizenship, yet in the real sense does not really give equal political participation in the public space.¹¹⁰

In Italy immigrants are mostly refer to as people coming outside the EU. The state only gives recognition to cultural and linguistic affiliation, hence migrants outside the European community maintains unrecognisable status. As a result it is hard to maintain

¹⁰⁹ Dominique, Schnapper. "La France de l'integration: Sociologie de la nation." *Contemporary Sociology* Vol. 4, (January 1994)

¹¹⁰ Adrain, Favell. "Philosophies of integration: Immigration and the idea of citizenship in France and Britain." *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 105, (July 1999)

ethnic minority status, which is one of the requirements for citizenship.¹¹¹ The implication of such differentiation between ethnic and linguistics minorities lies in the fact that Italy like French attaches great importance to cultural background of the immigrants. Hence being an outsider of the EU or lacking true Italian background makes citizenship right a tedious issue.¹¹²

Becoming a full flesh European is a hurdle for most foreigners; Muslim migrants of course are not exempted. Citizenship right has been problematic and muddy an issue; it has become the prerequisite for European socio-political, economic and welfare facility. If citizenship right still stands as a problem which translates to little or no way for political integration neither would there be any economic and political independence for Muslims in Europe. This is better ascertained by Nielsen that integration and participation of Muslims are much more a gleam in the eye than a reality on the ground.¹¹³

Without citizenship right no avenue for political participation such as voting. Citizenship in Britain might seem to be relaxed as compared to Germany and other Western European countries where foreigners are still hitching over their status. Immigration laws are stringent factors having huge impact on integration. The event of 9/11 and subsequent events further enhanced the institutions erected to deprive Muslims accessibility to citizenship right.

¹¹¹ Jonathan Chaloff, "Current Research into Education for Immigrants in Italy," *Child Immigration Project, Fondazione Censis*, Rome: Presented at the Fourth International Metropolis Conference, Washington, DC: (December 9, 1999)

¹¹² Ibid

¹¹³ Nielsen, Jorgen. Speech presented at the "Muslims in Europe Post 9/11" conference at St Antony's College, (Oxford, April 2003) 23-24

This issue of marginalization might be criticised from two angles. One, most of the Muslims in Europe are of foreign origin whose numerical strength increased with the passage of time. This group lack appreciable native participation that would and could help foster a bright movement for their right and possibly understands how to channel their path and compete with the state.

The absence of native-born clergy and group leadership almost certainly means that Muslim groups lack key resources, particularly information about how best to use the political system to their advantage.¹¹⁴

The big question is thus to what extent native-born Muslim scholars have good rapport with foreign born scholars who have dominated the scene and shown themselves as Islamic vanguards. One might try to find a similar situation in the US, where the clash of superiority wiggled between foreign scholars and native African-American at the very early stage of Islam in America.¹¹⁵

Bilingual deficiency of many Muslims is another point for observation which also reflects the issue of citizenship. Many of the Muslim migrants still lack the ability to master the host language, linguistic prowess is now taken seriously and a vital prerequisite to gain citizenship as reflected in the French and German law. In France linguistic influence on religion is evident, Muslims would remain stagnant and un-integrated if this trend persists.

¹¹⁴ Joel S. Fetzer, Christopher J. Soper., *Muslims and the State in Britain, France, and Germany*, (Cambridge University Press, 2004) 8-9.

¹¹⁵ Zahid H. Bukhari et-al, *Muslims' Place in the American Public Square: Hope, Fears, and Aspirations*, ed, (Rowman Altamira, 2004) 203-204

Dr. Djelloul Seddiki, the head of the theological institute at Muslim theological institute at the Paris Grand Mosque, observed that Islamic scholars have a long way going if they must become abreast with the demand of their host culture.

In the mosque, if the imam is not a French citizen and if he does not speak French, you can not speak about a 'French Islam'.¹¹⁶

One cannot dispute the significant numbers of Muslims in the west, yet insignificant when it comes to real-politics and socio-economic role-play. Majority of the population in the West are obviously non-Muslims and that tells the fact that Muslims would have to struggle hard in order to meet the tough demands of the society. The possibility of competition and accessibility to social welfare packages is often wrapped with citizenship label. Citizenship laws in different European countries often draw dividing line between the immigrants and the host society. The twinkling question is who to shoulder the blames, would it be the Muslims immigrants failing to integrate into the mainstream European society or European governments whose political leaning have failed them to actually integrate their foreign migrants. It is perhaps a muddy terrain that one cannot submit a yes or no answer.

3.2.2 Issue of Secularism

The critical discussion of European secularism is another standpoint impeding any serious Muslim political participation. On the religious platform, Europeans are quite sceptical about Muslim and their religious identification.

¹¹⁶ Daniel Strieff, "Will Islam *à la française* take hold?," *MSNBC News*, (June 6, 2006) <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/12812201/>

The past records of Muslims in Europe centuries back create a cynical scene. The fear nurtured is that if Muslims are allowed into the political terrain with full participation, their religious identity might threaten the edifice of European secularism. In this way, Europe would rather want Islam as an ethnic identity instead of religious identity. Rightwing politicians have equally taken advantage of this secular rhetoric as an avenue to marshal their political agenda and clamour for nationalistic sentiments among the native Europeans.

In fact there exist an unexplainable dilemma that why must Europe condone and fully accept its Muslim minority when Muslims majority countries will not do the same. Secularism on the other hand comes forth when Europeans deal with fellow Europeans, but religious sentiments surface when dealing with Muslims. Integration of Muslims in the European context would mean bending Islamic identity as certain Islamic fundamentals would have to be reconstructed and reinterpreted in the European milieu.¹¹⁷

The pressure imposed on Muslim organizations by European official, legal, political and bureaucratic expectations is such that Islam has to become an ethnic identity.¹¹⁸

Philippe de Villiers, head of the anti-immigrant Movement for France (MPF) party is one of those politicians triggering anti-Muslim sentiments and exclusion of Muslims from French political mainstream.

I am the only politician who tells the French the truth about the Islamisation of France, I do not think Islam is compatible with the French republic ... Islam is incompatible with

¹¹⁷ Tariq Ramadan "Challenges of Globalization need should be used as opportunities," a lecture delivered at the International Islamic University Islamabad Pakistan July 4, 2008

¹¹⁸ Jorgen Nielsen, *Muslims in Western Europe*. 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: University Press 2004) 128

France's secular values....and asked Paris to stop all mosque construction, impose a citizen's charter demanding the strict separation of religion and state, and ban all Islamic organizations.¹¹⁹

Philippe de Villiers is not of course alone in such attitudinal posture that sees Europe as cultural independent with less compulsion for multiculturalism. Prime Minister Berlusconi during his electoral campaign in March 2006 said "We do not want Italy to become a multiethnic multicultural country; we are proud of our culture and of our tradition."¹²⁰

3.2.3 European immigration laws

European Muslims are part of the broad stream of minorities residing in Europe living side by side with the bigger European culture. In the recent times, the debate is hot as to the correlation of Muslims and European culture. Some right wing politicians have exploited the sensitivity of this issue to clamour for Europe for European alone. They often try to distinguish between native Europeans from Europeans of foreign origin. European immigration laws have to many extent act as hurdles for integration perhaps it has greatly contributed to marginalization. Although, one cannot either dismiss or remain incognizance of some integrational measure of some of the Europeans. The restrictive measures however have been greatly influenced by the event of 9/11 and subsequent others in Europe. Some European governments have woken from long inspired slumber in view of their immigration laws that have dampened the importance of minority groups.

¹¹⁹ *Reuters*, "French Politician: "Islamisation of France", (April 23, 2006)

¹²⁰ Maurizio, Albahari. "Religious Symbols by in Italy," *ISIM Frictions in Europe*, (2006)

Evidently, Germany still does not open wide its door of citizenship, as most foreigners are still referred to as guest-workers. In this way, Muslims are affected by immigration laws that specifically limit and threaten serious political participation.

German Muslims...cannot as effectively participate through conventional politics, parties have limited reasons to make appeals to them, and they face the threat of deportation if they engage in unconventional political activism.¹²¹

However in the recent times, German government tries to facilitate that integration process yet some of the coalition parties of the government resent the development and obviously show their disapproval for multicultural Germany. To further complicate the issue, the government sees German language as priority for all legal foreigners and as a source of getting welfare benefit.

The Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU)/Social Democratic Party (SPD) government is urging migrants to demonstrate their willingness "to accept the Basic Law and the entire legal system without reservation".....In addition, immigrants have to "give a clear sign of their belonging to Germany" by learning the German language. "This requires individual initiative, diligence and personal responsibility,"¹²²

¹²¹ Joel, S. Fetzer. Christopher, J. Soper., *Muslims and the State in Britain, France, and Germany*, (Cambridge University Press, 2004) 12

¹²² *BBC News Monitoring*, "Immigrant Children to Start Learning German in Kindergarten," (July 6, 2006)

Social Democratic Party (SPD) Secretary-General Hubertus Heil said in Berlin on Monday that the SPD dissociated itself from the "multicultural daydreaming" of the Greens just as it did from the Conservatives' "fits of rightwing populism". The party however holds that learning the German language earnestly was "an admission ticket to participation."¹²³

The politicisation of immigration law in Germany further discourages Muslims as well as other foreign-born migrants. German immigration law would not accept dual citizenship, a process that hampers most Muslims of Turkish origin. Noting the seriousness of this issue, Cem Ozdemir first German of Turkish descent elected to the Parliament (Bundestag) and now head of the Green Party observed that political incapacity has been fostered by the law. More importantly, politicians of certain parties still fail to acknowledge their presence and more insult on injury is the fact that Muslims themselves lack united front to fight for their cause.

Voters of Turkish origin are not seen as one group with common interests. They are more or less ignored by the two main parties (the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats), and they have failed to organize themselves to speak with one voice.¹²⁴

¹²³ BBC Monitoring, (July 11, 2006)

¹²⁴ Cem Ozdemir, Press release November 24 2005
<http://www.epc.eu/en/ce.asp?TYP=CE&LV=177&see=y&t=42&PG=CE/EN/detail&l=2&AI=45>
5

In the same way, in France the new interior minister sponsored a new immigration law that would further keep a bay or discourage participation. The new law obviously makes it strenuous for permanent residence, citizenship right and reunification of family member. Many of the foreigners living in France and prospective migrants are resentful of the new bill seen as racial-centred, although acknowledged and has been passed into law by the French Parliament. It becomes extremely difficult for Muslims in such atmosphere to put forward serious political front, perhaps most Muslims among other migrants live in the ghettos and underdeveloped part of France save for fewer in the cities doing petty business. The new law would rather not alleviate the plight of the migrants but will stigmatize foreigners, discriminate against the poor and undermine France's traditional position as shelter for the underprivileged. However, one must not be bias that the new law paved way for skilled workers and excluded unqualified immigrants.

The new immigration law makes it harder for resident immigrants to bring their families to France. requires newcomers to take French and civics lessons and ends their automatic right to a long-term residence permit after 10 years in France.¹²⁵

3.2.4 Lack of Resources and Political participation

Politics in today's world requires politicians to be economically loaded, an implication that the realm of seeking political power is not open to individual or body lacking economic viability. Muslim immigrants of the second generation have always longed for equally socio-economic and political participation in the European public

¹²⁵ *Reuter*, "France: Tightening up immigration laws," (June 30, 2006)

space, but often lament of certain obstacles. Many factors might better explain why Muslims are still lacking grip of political power in Europe. One explanation might obviously be the ethno-cultural divide, as Muslims are yet to be fully seen as culturally integrative and ethnically similar to the native Europeans.

Another factor would be the aged stereotype view of Muslims which has its root in the crusade era¹²⁶ coupled with the fact that, religiously, Muslims are not same as many Europeans of the Christian faith. Religion and ethnicity cannot be underestimated as motivating forces for electorability in contemporary politics.

Sander in *Muslim communities* also pointed to the fact that failure of the larger society (state) to grant the small minority special right explains their narrow survivability.¹²⁷ The economic constraint and other discussed factor can sharpen our understanding on what political level Muslims in Europe might be. Their political survivability would evidently rest in the support they give to existing power parties and political heavy weight. The numerical strength of Muslims in different European societies is becoming noticeable not just for demographic implication but how politically instrumental they could be in winning votes.

The ground reality is that such strength is yet to manifest into greater opportunity. Since Muslims lack the fund, and public support to establish their own party, many of them would rather join exiting party or stay aloof. But the fact is that the new generations would like to actively participate by representing their community, expressing their identity and wanting to exhibit their integrative trait as a European Muslim.

¹²⁶ Steven Vertovec and Ceri Peach, "Islam in Europe, the politics of religion and community, migration, minorities and citizenship," *Journal of Law and Religion*, Vol. 15, No.1 / 2, 2000-2001

¹²⁷ Gerd Nonneman et al, "Muslim Communities in the New Europe." *Journal of Law and Religion*, Vol. 15, No.1 / 2, (2000-2001)

The wanted-to-be European Muslims openly stretch their arms towards these vote-hungry politicians whose primary aim either to unseat the incumbent or fill a political gap. Since Muslims lack the financial strength to compete during electioneering period. They often give their mandate to parties they feel could actualise their aspirations. For instance German Turks would show their loyalty to party that supports the Turkey-EU membership. In this background then German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder of the Social Democrat (SPD)-Green coalition received an undisputable support from the German-Turk community because the party favours Turkey membership of the EU and effort by that government to change the archaic laws of German citizenship.¹²⁸

This situation resonates across Europe and became a trend among Muslims in Europe; the British Muslims seem to understand the tactic the most. With such propensity Britain relatively in Western Europe have greater Muslim public political participation. This indicates that British Muslims have attained certain grade and achievement in their road towards integration, and that in itself must be credited to the multicultural intention of the British society. These Muslim vanguards give their votes based on ethnic and sometimes religious agenda to politicians within their mind frame. A British MP was caught unnoticed as he failed to realise how Muslims swing their vote accordingly.

Anxious immigrants who throw themselves on the mercy of
their members of parliament are now a minority. Their

¹²⁸ Henrike Hochmuth, "Turks in Germany: Are they a bridge or an obstacle to Turkey's EU membership," *The Journal of Turkish Weekly*, Thursday, (September 07 2006)

children and grandchildren will only vote for politicians
who explicitly meet their demands.¹²⁹

Obviously Muslim political participation can be subdivided into two, formal and informal. Scarce is the possibility but yet there are Muslim personalities with high ranking political portfolios, such as in 2002 the political inclusion in Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin's government of two cabinet members of North African origin and similar political figures in Britain where Muslim political participation has been notable. At present, there are four MPs in the British Parliament of which two of them having Pakistani origin, all from the Labour Party.¹³⁰ In Germany, there are two Muslim MPs, all ethnic Turks, while in France there is no Muslim representative in Parliament.

One significant characteristic of this approach is that most Muslim figures do not necessarily assume political power on the platform of Islamic identity; rather their ascendance has always been that of the accommodationist, meaning those who came to terms with the status quo and believe the only possible way to have their chance is to dance to the melody. They rather represent their constituency than Muslim going for a Muslim cause. Sadiq Khan a Member of British House of Common from Tooting, describes himself in this manner. "I am a Tooting, boy and man. I was born in the constituency and I have lived there all my life. I married a Tooting girl."¹³¹

¹²⁹ Roy Hattersley, "I took the Muslim vote for granted but that has all changed," *The Guardian*, Friday, (April 8 2005)

¹³⁰ Jack Straw, "Pakistan and UK: A Living Bridge," speech at the Iqbal International Institute for Research and Dialogue, International Islamic University Islamabad Pakistan (16 September, 2008)

¹³¹ Sadiq Khan MP speech at the British House of Common May 23, 2005 http://www.sadiqkhan.org.uk/speeches/maiden_speech.htm

In this way, most Muslims whose identity is at the frontline failed to become part of the system and that is tantamount to exclusion from the mainstream politics. Hence there are relatively few Muslim organized fronts in political terrain of Continental Europe; rather what has been the case is informal participation which often carries feeble effects

Chapter 4

4.1. Analysis

4.1.1 Three stages of Muslim presence in Europe

The overall assessment of the presence of Muslims in Western Europe in particular indicates three evolutionary stages. The earliest form of rapport with the larger society was a soundless co-existence when Muslims held the status of guest workers. Then the economic preference of this first generation of Muslims outshone their religio-cultural instinct as regard having noticeable impact in the public space.

The accumulation of economic security, reunification of families and procreation paved the way for the stage two. The stage was obviously characterised by a new generation with relatively fair understand of the European value system than the first generation. The stage was replete with socio-cultural fear nurtured by the first generation that their children will lose touch with the culture of the home country. However this fundamental fear was in fact not unfounded since the latter generation needed socialization in order to be fit for their new home. Hence it became an era enveloped in dilemma, where latter generation juggled at the intersection between the traditional and religio-cultural values of their parents (first generation) and the compelling European norms. Nevertheless the theme of social integration and economic rights runs during that era. Evidently, social problem emanating from the presence of a new culture and people was felt as Muslim increases numerically in various part of Europe. The latter development of restrictive immigration policy has much doing with the social consequence of immigration as seen across different parts of Europe. Europe though in demand for immigrants never had any pragmatic administrative preparedness for the

feasible upshots of immigration, nor was there any cogent plan to tackle its social problems thus it practically took the government a protracted effort managing this imigrational upshots.

The third stage crept in with the issue of political integration and identity crisis. There was significant correlation between the second and third stage. The stage two had a carryover effect on the third stage. Nonetheless one particular distinction of this era was the reawakening of Islamic identity mostly among the third generation. In fact this stage was culminated by laden changing world order, political tempo across Europe and religious developments around the world, all having a convincing impact. The Rushdie satanic verse saga, the Iranian revolution, the fall of Russian forces in Afghanistan (leading to the end of the Cold War) and the emergence of new Europe contributed immensely to the mantra of this period. At this stage many of the new generation of Muslims see themselves more of being European than their parents and would rather want equal opportunity like every other minority. Yet the claim of a global Islamic identity remains Influential among this generation.

The distinction of this era lies in the collaborative effort of the second and the third generation struggling to make a public political impact. Consequently the trend of globalization and new form of citizenship stimulated the aspiration and clamour of Muslims of this generation. To dismiss the claim that Muslims of this generation were in fact not acquainted with the local European socio-cultural value will be fencing the truth. The socialization process they have undergone obviously equipped them to challenge their perceived marginalized status in the public space. Most importantly citizenship status became one of the most aspired statuses as the dearth of citizenship status

roadblock all opportunity in the public sphere. The right to European citizenship was premised on the argument that the first generation had contributed to the socio-economic development of their respective countries. Meanwhile their permanent residential status is equally responsible for their numerical strength that came to rescue Europe from its demographic problem and as such boosted the labour force of Europe. Hence various restrictive immigration laws that debar Muslims from having equal citizenship rights are unfounded and demand a review. Challenging the status quo and effort towards integration continued till the turn of new millennium accosted by new the form of large scale violence (terrorism) much of its blame shouldered on Muslim.

4.1.2 Cultural Conflict and the Host Society

The contentious discourse of Muslim integration in Europe has been very much broadly discussed as Muslim related issues gained more currency and emphasis in the wake of 9/11 and similar events in Europe. Europeans are point clear and unequivocal that Muslims as minority in the region should not expect a separate and distinct treatment in comparison with other ethnic, cultural and religious minorities residing in Europe.

The crux of the discourse evolves around the extent to which the European Muslim community can become integrated into the mainstream. Migration trends in Europe cutting across ethnic, cultural and religious minorities point to the fact that every single minority never became an integral of the mainstream without confronting certain chain of constraints. Introspectively this protracted path becomes an inevitable cross every ethnic minority must successfully shoulder prior to its recognition as an integral of the mainstream.

The European Jewish community classically captures the picture in a self explanatory manner and thus became a cornerstone onto which every other ethnic minority is expected to experience. Lars Dencik with specificity identified the social integration passage of the Swedish Jewish community as (marginalization, segregation, assimilation and integration) such trend turned inductive template for the understanding of social integration of ethnic minority across Europe. Hence the question persists should European Muslim community be an exemption. Of course it would be elusive drafting out any cogent and specific answer in view of many contesting variables such as time and space.

The hard truth often indigestible is that the newly emerging Muslim community in Europe would have to compromise certain aspect of their faith before their status as an integral part of the society can be granted and more importantly availing equity of opportunity within the public space. But this discourse is hard to sell to Muslims having an obdurate attachment to their religion and culture. Islam the second largest growing faith in Europe is defined by Muslim as a doctrine embedded both with mundane and spiritual ethos. The latter covers simultaneously cultural and religious dictates that governs the life of a Muslim, thus some Muslims argues that compromising certain aspect of their culture is tantamount to the strangulation of their spirituality.

The fear nurtured by Muslims particularly the first generation was the panic of cultural assimilation that their Islamic culture might become eclipsed by the European culture. Such fear does not necessarily resonate among Muslim of the second generation partly because of a relatively fair engagement with the larger society. The fear of the first generation is further given emphasis by the religious consciousness radiating in the latter

(third generation). However, much of the clamour for an active public sphere has been jointly forerun by the latter two generations.

This generational divide has more to do with time and space. The silent co-existence that characterised the first generation is witnessing a shift. They started as economic sojourner, culturally isolated within their neighbourhood and more concerned about their economic need than religious necessity during the late 50s and early 60s. Such temperament changed with the emergence of a new generation with a distinct horizon distinguishable from what prevails among the first generation.

The presence of this new Muslims and their public demand within the larger milieu of Europe meant that Europeans would have to accept the reality of their presence and avail them possible chances for easier assimilation and integration. Scholars in the recent times have enunciated the compelling truth that certain functional policies in Europe are very much responsible for some of the glacial characters wore by Muslim youths. Kepel (2006), Cesari (2006) Haddad (2002) and Jack Chirac (AFP News, 2006) are few of the scholars and government that projected this fact.

Since culture and religion evolves around the integrational discourse of Muslims in Europe thus brings to bear the critical thesis of the compatibility of Islamic religio-culture in the larger European context. The discourse in the recent times has gained spotlight alongside the project of Europe-Islam or European Muslim.

Tariq Ramadan and many of his likes identified as the prophet of Europe have taken position on how to create a conducive Islamic atmosphere for Muslims in Europe. These prophets argue that Islamic law has to be re-understood, reconstructed and reinterpreted for the conduciveness of European Muslims in such a way that would defeat

the argument of many Europeans that Islamic culture has no place in Europe and is devoid of democratic values of the west, hence an indication that integration of Muslims would not be anything of ease to discuss save bending some of their cultural principles.

In the same direction many European governments have initiated efforts towards the creation of Euro-Islam and the making of a European Muslim. This effort is manifested in the shape of reducing the inflow of foreign Muslim scholars and clergies (Imam) from largely Muslim countries; hence the creation of Islamic institutes across Europe where European scholars could be produced is facilitated. Keeping in view of the devastation of 9/11, 7/7, Madrid train blast on the image of Muslims living in Europe, some corners within the helm of authority in Europe believe such events cannot be disconnected from the hatred and violent message disseminated by the foreign Imams residing in Europe. Former British PM, Tony Blair was at the forefront of such campaign and the idea gained certain amount of reception among French officials and Islamic community. Such project however has not been that receptive because some antagonists of the project believe it is a way for fragmenting the universal Islamic community (Ummah) hence cutting the bridge between Muslims of the west and the rest of the world. Two, it is equally understood that such project will jeopardise the very essence of Islamic unity and universal brotherhood and the sense of one-Islam for all Muslims regardless of the geographical locale.

4.2. Necessity of Ijtihad and De-ghettoization

It is apparent that Muslims in Europe represent the Islamic world peripheral, where Islam is practiced at the edge. It would not be misleading to assert that Islam in the core would not take same shape as Islam at the edge in view of many circumstances. One,

Muslims in the core of Islamic world constitutes the majority and are more than likely to practice the fundamentals of their faith with ease. Two, aside from the spiritual context of the faith, the tendency to exhibit and manifest in their daily life the cultural aspect of Islam remains unquestionable. Premised on these two backgrounds the dissimilarity between the core and edge can be marked.

The interesting question is what constitutes a Muslim identity, and how does an Islamic identity constitute challenges to being a European. The more challenging question is the integration of the two identities (Islamic and European). This I believe is the major bone of contention stirring the discourse of European Muslim integration. Another compelling question needed to be trashed is the extent to which Islam provides for its adherent multiplicity of identity.

Muslims in the Muslim majority countries often develop some amount of concern for the Muslims in diaspora particularly Muslims struggling to have a place in European public space. This concern further broadens the scope of the discourse of social integration of Muslims in the European milieu. One might further argue that if culture lies in the core of the misunderstanding between the host societies and Muslim community in Europe, and if Muslims must break through the stormy climate. The situation would necessitate a reappraisal of Islamic fundamental for a conducive co-existence in Europe.

Surfing through the primary and secondary sources of Islamic jurisprudence brings in the attention of (Ijtihad) that is independence reasoning based on Qur'an and tradition of the prophet that facilitates reassessment and reconstruction of Islamic fundamental when the demand is deemed. Ijtihad has a strong footing among the earliest

Muslim community even during the era of the noble prophet Muhammad (saw). The classical tradition known for the establishment of Ijtihad is sourced out from order of the prophet prescribed to one of his companions upon the latter emigration to Yemen.¹³² Much argument surrounds the project of ijihad though during the chain of Islamic history the door of such reasoning process “bab al-Ijtihad” was professed closed. Be that it may, it is imperative that the supposedly shut door of Ijtihad needed to be reopened for Muslims struggling at the intersection of being a European and identifiable as Muslim. Breaking through the dilemma of how to assimilate and integrate Muslims into the mainstream has lot to do with the project of reinforcing the principle of Ijtihad on the continent.

Europe cannot continue to risk the oscillated kind of relations between itself and its Muslim community. The acceptance of the reality of Islam on the continent remains paramount and fencing such reality upon the manifestation of Islam as second largest faith of the continent questions Europe’s sense of veracity. The changing cultural symbolism in Europe as in the development of Muslim community can on one hand be an added value to the cultural configuration of Europe. Acceptance of the reality of Islamic culture on the continent will further accentuate the multicultural propensity of Europe and more importantly its democratic value of tolerance. Hence co-existence of Islamic and Judeo-Christian civilizations in Europe obviously will further challenge the whole thesis of civilizational clash.

Since the concern of diaspora Muslims in Europe continues to bridge an understanding and sense of brotherhood with the rest of the Muslim world particularly in

¹³² Hassan Niyazi, *Islamic Jurisprudence*, Islamic Research Institute, (Islamabad: IRI press, 2000)

Muslim majority society thus brings forth the argument of an inseparable relations. In this background reinventing ijtiḥād in the European context would have lot doing with the rest of the Muslim world owing to the in-divorceable relations of the two ends, though such project success heavily depend on a triangular effort. The triangulation involves Muslims and their respective European governments and Muslims at the core.

Hence active participation of European governments remains an integral essence of the project. The creation of an acceptable Islamic institutions and research institutes should not be the singular concern of the Muslim community but should also involve the unequivocal representation of European governments. The establishment of such centres of learning would further dismiss the insinuation that Europe has always been indifferent towards the educational achievement of its Muslim minority community.

The reason why European governments cannot shoulder all responsibility on Muslim representatives or self-proclaimed scholars residing in Europe lies in the fact that being an Arab as the case may be necessarily does not project Islamic scholarship. It is in this connection that the erudition of scholars from outside Europe particularly from Muslim scholarship countries can substantially be helpful in the actualisation of the project of reinventing ijtiḥād. However, as earlier mentioned that relation between Muslim in the west and outside Europe is indivisible calls into attention the active role expected of Muslims in Europe alongside the foreign scholars towards the project materialization.

Vetting scholars from abroad might be strenuous and complicated owing to the view that certain foreign scholars from Muslim countries are alleged for the divisive message among Muslim youth in Europe. The chances of discord is of course

unavoidable during the vetting process as certain Muslim groupings will be much interested in the scholar of their choice essentially from a particular sect or country. This inevitable problem can be at least abated by the serious involvement of the government in collaboration with the groups concerned. For instance with government involvement, committee creation is very much feasible through the selection of representatives of all stakeholders within the Muslim community. Such committee as its stand representing all interest groupings will shoulder the task of vetting scholars both within and abroad on a consensus bases.

The whole thesis of reinvention of *ijtihad* projects the resilient character of Islamic doctrine. It is well established that Muslims in the core have little or no hurdles practicing their faith both on the spiritual and cultural level; hence there is less complication or anxiety within, in view of the existence of both written and undocumented code of conduct in Muslim majority society. The fact of the matter is that Islam under an Islamic leadership and in an Islamic state uphold distinctive feature from Islam under a non-Muslim leadership and state. Historically, the accommodative potential of Islam gained more potency upon the shift and development of Islam from the core into the far-flung edge where Islam was a new phenomenon.¹³³ Islam exercised its accommodativeness when it moved away from core to the edge as many cultures not necessarily Arab culture were accommodated and subsequently integrated during the developmental stage of Islamic civilization. Exercising *ijtihad* and making Islam more

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¹³³ Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, Second Edition, (Edinburgh: Cambridge University Press, 2002)

relevant to the demand of Muslim at any given time and space gets opportunity more often than not at the edge.¹³⁴

The reinvention of *ijtihad* in Europe will be the template towards understanding the resilience of Islam and how it can relate with other culture. Doing this will put to rest the claim that Islam has no commonality with western value. The apparent fact is that all civilizations share certain commonality yet having distinction as a result of their locale. In this way, the effort of Muslims from both the core and edge can bring forth similarities and difference and as such lead to an understanding and equally shape the track for easy integration. The application of the concept of *ijtihad* would further lead to better understanding of Islam among Europeans who have long nursed ill-feeling of Islamic culture and its public manifestation.

On the whole, the outcome of *ijtihad* will definitely be a new beginning for Muslims in Europe. It will be the panacea for if not all the socio-political integrational issues waylaying Muslim harmonious relations with the larger European society. One of the social consequences of immigration has been ghettoization, of course not exclusively a Muslim syndrome but a phenomenon among ethnic minority. With the application of *ijtihad* and its outcome the process of de-ghettoization among Muslim community will become achievable. De-ghettoization is a necessity for social integration and in fact can be realised through the application of the concept of *khuruj* (moving out). The latter demand Muslims to abscond their isolation, moving into the mainstream for integration. Self concealment stands opposite to integration, as Muslims like every other fearful ethnic groups panic over being culturally absorbed. It is in this direction the tool of *ijtihad*

¹³⁴ Richard W. Bulliet, *Islam: The View From the Edge*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994

can be earnestly employed to making Muslim see the non-profitability of self concealment that there will be no harm if Islamic culture lives side by side with another culture. Harnessing ijtiḥād with all alacrity is a value laden project that requires no compromise or hesitation for the survival of Muslims both in the short and long term.

The project of ijtiḥād can in one way be helpful in the actualisation of the newly embraced terminology of Euro-Islam. The latter according to Bassam Tibi will be the culmination and integrative process of Islamic and western values such as tolerance, democracy and respect for human rights.¹³⁵ Although Enes Karic argues that such terminology “has no place either in older and relatively past orientalist literatures or among writers of Islam on the continent. Euro-Islam rather recently gained currency and conjectured as a project with ulterior motives, rather conspiratorial.”¹³⁶

The necessity of the project of ijtiḥād on the continent is evidently a timely necessity though exigential and would demand the co-operative erudition of both Muslim and European scholars within Europe and outside the continent as observed earlier that the project is triangular. The necessity of this triangular adventure will be steered towards cogency of effort because European intellectuals, politicians and the media are needed onboard as their influence should not at the slightest moment be relegated. Edward Said’s “Covering Muslims” captures this picture lucidly.

Furthermore, ijtiḥād at this critical period for Muslims in Europe should be the most priceless sorted project as it appears and carries the potential of bridging the difference in existence among European Muslims. It has well been established that one of

¹³⁵ Nezar Al-Sayyad and Manuel Castells, *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam: Politics Culture and citizenship in the age of globalization* (ed.), (Berkeley: University of California, 2002)

¹³⁶ Enes Karic, “Is Euro-Islam a Myth, Challenge of a Real Opportunity for Muslims and Europe,” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 22, No. 2, (2002)

the hurdles facing Muslims in Europe which of course affects their easy passage towards social integration is the existence of fragmentation. This division is obviously multidimensional and a carryover from home countries. Muslims in Europe share same universal Islam but dissimilar on the bases of race, country, sect and school of thought (Madhab). These disparities have often times keep them fragmented and that has failed them in achieving a decisive and common concerted effort at gaining full public recognition. Thus, if ijtiḥād will be reopened, all of these differences certainly will come under scrutiny, eroded and such will usher in a new dawn. The essence of ijtiḥād as project for the materialization of Euro-Islam is of course lies in the proactive effort of those engage in it. It will manifest a new lens of understanding Islam particularly at the edge and in the modern period a model. It will equally not fail to cement the rapport among young European Muslims on one hand leading to what Jocelyne Cesari termed as pan-European Islam.¹³⁷ While on the other end fosters a new beginning of interaction between the Muslim community and their host societies.

¹³⁷ Sophie Body-Gendrot and Marco Martiniello, eds, *Minorities in European Cities: The Dynamics of Social Integration and Social Exclusion at the Neighbourhood Level*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000)

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Unlike the system of colonialism that was an uninvited incursion, migration of Muslims to Europe was characterised by invitation which in itself has cultural, colonial, linguistics and proximity factors associated with it. The presence of Muslims in Europe like every other minority was not coincidental rather it was the necessity of the era as Europe was just recovering and recomposing itself from the ruins of the Second War World. The newly reconstructed industrial sectors of Europe was vehemently in need of labourers, hence European labour doors were opened to immigrants from former colonies. International migration of Muslims towards the shore of Europe has strong cultural links between the host and immigrant countries. Colonial heritage was in fact more responsible for this cultural links; hence many prospective immigrants would rather prefer the country of former colonial master as destination. The intertwine of colonialism, culture and language remains underscored as factors pushing and pulling immigrants out of their countries. Muslims like every other immigrant migrated to their newly found home in view of linguistic convenience as former British colony evidently prefer Britain for English convenience. This of course is true of France and countries involved in colonialism at a particular stage in history. Although they were invited as guest workers with the hope that their stay will be temporary but the reverse was the case as most Muslim immigrants seeking economic security in these countries opted for permanent stay than returning home to encounter economic woes that enveloped the world after the Second War World.

Immigration later became a serious issue and thus brought forth some social issues for which the host European government has no ready-made policy or arrangement to managing the situation.

Unlike Britain, France and Germany that witnessed immigration at the earliest, both Spain and Italy became immigration countries at a much later period. The two latter countries were themselves emigration countries before shifting to immigration nations at the onset of 1970s. This course depicts the distinction between the West and South of Europe. Yet all of these countries share commonalities in view of their demand for immigrants, a testimony that their industrial economies then and till now was greatly in need of foreigners. The wrath of the war was mostly felt in Europe as there was demographic problem in the continent; immigration obviously filled the demographic gap. Second, immigrants usefulness was much felt in the unskilled labour sectors which in a way rescue the continent from deserted menial jobs by the natives. Immigration was a necessity not necessarily a liability as it is being projected today, though its socio-cultural and economic consequences have been the cornerstone for the argument against immigration recently.

By and large Muslim immigrants to Europe started their sojourn as economic seekers and as their number increases through family reunification and procreation the issues affecting the Muslim community shifted. The dawn of the second and third generations brought forth a new face of Muslim presence in Europe, an era characterised by socio-cultural and political integration. The new generation wanted to be an integral of the system yet have to settle with the dilemma of being a Muslim on one end and a European on the other. The silent relations between the host societies and the Muslim

communities was flare-up upon the occurrence of 9/11, 7/7, Madrid train blast and subsequent others. These events reshaped the level of interaction and heightened the unspeakable warm-cold relations into confrontational relations.

Islam and Muslim have thus become the most discussed issues around Europe when speaking of social integration. The scope of such discussion has gone beyond religious and conference forum but now openly discussed by experts and non-experts alike. Scoring political goals and professing a nationalist view will be easily achieved if Muslim related issues are drawn onboard. Nevertheless, Muslims in the recent times are socially seen as unfit for the western society over the claim that Islamic religio-cultural values share no commonalities with western value. The premise of this argument is that Muslims have refused integration because of their obstinate attachment to their Islamic culture. This argument might be partially factual, yet many Muslims also argue that shouldering alone the blame of non-integration on Muslims is unjust; rather certain laws, policies and imigrational procedures functional in Europe are equally responsible for the dearth of social integration among the Muslim community.

Hence the demand for social integration from the Muslim community will be possible if the host societies will redress its policies and open up all opportunities to really integrate this community. Nonetheless, Europeans are also of the view that Muslims should not expect any sort of preferential treatment instead they should be ready to pass through the passage of social integration with which others before them have experienced. The case of the Jewish societies that have gone through different experiences and forms of marginalization is made as template for others to follow. Be

that as it may, Muslims sometimes argue that time and space matters and circumstance are very much different.

Such claim of marginalization as a result of socio-cultural, economic and political hurdles places the Muslim community into self-concealment or ghettoization. But hard truth is that mutual understanding between the host and the Muslim community cannot be achieved through such self-concealment. Hence it is apt and timely that Muslims should desert their ghettoised tendency, by that adopting the concept of khuruj. It was only through moving out from their shell earliest Muslims were able to disseminate the teaching and cultural value of Islam; otherwise Islam would have remained the religion of Medinah.

Having understood the religio-cultural contention surrounding Muslim integration in their respective European societies, it is imperative that a concerted effort needed to be initiated so as to abate the vitriolic comments about Islam and Muslim on the continent. More importantly, a vacillated relation in Europe existing between Muslim community and their host societies cannot continue for posterity sake. Upon this comes the argument of Islam at the core and edge. Muslims in Europe exist as Muslims at the edge which of course cannot be the same as Muslims at the core. Historically, the jurisprudence and communal law has always been unearthed at the edge of Islam. The reason being that at the core Muslims have all right and opportunity to practice their faith upon the availability of both written and unwritten code of conduct, while such provision is always missing at the edge. Therefore for the edge Muslims to practice their faith at ease and convenience, there must be a reappraisal and understanding of the faith along with the environment. Coupled with the view of Imam Ghazali that ensuring a convenience

existence is part of Islam. It is in this direction, re-opening of the purportedly shut door of 'bab al ijtihad' must be reopened. Ijtihad has always been the channel for Muslims to re-understand their faith in accordance with a given milieu. The purposefulness of ijtihad lies in its ability to bring a new dawn in the present cold relations between Muslims and their host European societies. With the project of ijtihad Islamic cultural values can be reviewed much that it will fit the necessity of Europe without contradicting the basic tenet of Islam. It will foster better understanding of Islam on the continent and also shed light on the resilience of Islam as religion with accommodative ability. Hence that could further dismiss the wrongful assertion that Islam is not tolerant or having basic conventional norms shared among Europeans.

It is sometimes a matter of lackadaisical tendency or lack of ability to explore the hiding values of Islam. For instance some in the west profess the value of human right and sometimes believes it is a missing value among Muslims particularly in Muslim dominated countries. One might be shocked to know that Islam held and taught by the noble prophet Muhammad (saw) was a comprehensive faith replete with humane feeling not for Muslim alone but for mankind in general. According to a reported tradition, the prophet once saw the corpse of a Jew carried in front of him and his companions, the prophet stood up and was questioned by his companions why he stood while the corpse passed by. The humble prophet said I have done that because I humble myself before He that created the soul of the Jew and I show my humility because I am also indebted to death. This is an indication that Islamic understand of human rights transcend living being, perhaps the perception of human rights in Islam takes a step further as it recognises the existence and love to be shown to animals. The prophet strongly prohibits

Muslims (his companions) to kill or extinct animals with fire. The prophet was reported for his kindness for animals let alone for human. In one of the traditions, the prophet narrated the love shown by a prostitute to a dog and such humane feeling paved way for her success to paradise, while a devout fasting woman refused to show same compassion to a cat and she was doomed. All of these and countless other narrations exemplified the teaching of Islam on many issues now championed in the west.

It is no more acceptable that the door of ijtiḥād is closed; closing such vital channel is in itself a detriment to the progress of Islam. Islam is a living faith having potential to accommodate diverse culture at any given time and space. The success of the project of ijtiḥād will be a milestone for a better understanding of Islam universally. It will on one hand facilitate the long dragged issue of social integration in Europe and consequently can be a model for Muslims in the other side of the Atlantic particularly in North America. It will also be true for Muslims in South, Central America and the Caribbean. Yet making this project fruitful will demand a triangular effort of Muslims community in Europe, European government-cum opinion makers and Muslims in the core nations of Islam.

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