

Islam in Europe: Not a Fort, But a House with Many Doors

When we talk about Muslims in Europe we have to think of a palette with many different colours. It is impossible to form any general picture of European Muslims because of the profound diversity among them, e.g. in how they interpret the Qur'an, how they implement Islamic faith in daily life and how they participate in European society. We learn most about Islam as a lived experience in Europe, not from Islamic text books, but from the Muslim people who read them. We are never in contact with Islam, but we can come in contact with a Muslim and his or her Islam. Islam cannot answer questions, but Muslims can, we can talk to 'them' and 'they' to us. Islam often is interpreted as univocal while Muslims constitute a cacophony of different voices. Understanding this will help us to prepare a way to best reach out to them with the love of Christ and not use a one-size-fits-all approach in evangelizing Muslims. In this workshop we will look at 15 of the most predominant kinds of Muslims that can be identified in Europe.

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I. Introduction

II. Our view of Islam in Europe

A. Islam is considered violent

B. Islam is considered intolerant

C. Islam is considered anti-democratic

D. Islam is considered anti-women

III. Our focus should be on Muslims, not on Islam

IV. We need a new set of glasses

V. Different ways of being Muslim in Europe

A. Angry Muslims

B. Converted Muslims

C. Cool Muslims

D. Critical Muslims

E. ExMuslims

F. Folk Muslims

G. Fundamentalist Muslims

H. Liberal Muslims

I. Mystical Muslims

J. Ordinary Muslims

K. Progressive Muslims

L. Reformist Muslims

M. Secular Muslims

Suggested Readings:

Allievi, Stefano, “Muslim voices, European ears” in *Producing Islamic Knowledge: Transmission and dissemination in Western Europe*, Martin van Bruinessen and Stefano Allievi (eds) Routledge, Oxon, 2011, page 28, 29

An-Na’im, Abdullahi Ahmed. “European Islam or Islamic Europe : The Secular State for Negotiating Pluralism” in the book *Islam and Europe: Crises and Challenges* (Foblets and Carlier eds)

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Dassetto, F, Ferrari, S and Marechal, B (2007), *Islam in the European Union: What’s at stake in the future?*, Strasbourg: European Parliament

Duderija, Adis. "Literature Review: Identity Construction in the Context of Being a Minority Immigrant Religion: The Case of Western-born Muslims", *Immigrants and Minorities*, Vol. 25. no 2, July 2007, pp 141-162.

Halliday, Fred. "The struggle for the Migrant Soul" *Times Literary Supplement*, 14-20 April pp 387-88

Jeldtoft, Nadia. "On defining Muslims", *Yearbook on Muslims in Europe*, vol. 1 (2009), pp (9-14)

Mandaville, Peter, *Transnational Muslim Politics: Reimagining the Umma* Routledge, London, 2000.

Tariq Ali, "Why are we so obsessed by Islam?" in *Islam and Europe –Challenges and Opportunities* Marie-Claire Foblets (ed); Leuven University Press, 2008.