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## New Multicultural Identities in Europe

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CHAPTER II

# Islamophobia and the Crises of Europe's Multiculturalism

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*Chris Allen*

The manifesto of Anders Behring Breivik made clear who he saw as the 'enemies' of contemporary Europe: Islam and multiculturalism. Such views are not the preserve of Breivik and the far-right however; similar views are routinely expressed across Europe's political landscape. Whilst Germany's Angela Merkel, Britain's David Cameron and France's Nicolas Sarkozy explicitly declared that multiculturalism was dead, less explicit was the suggestion that Islam and Muslims were to blame. As Parekh puts it, the crisis of European multiculturalism depends upon answering the 'Muslim Question'. This chapter explores some of these key issues in the British context before widening its focus to include Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. In conclusion, contemporary discourses about the crises of multiculturalism are evaluated as regards their potential to feed into and reinforce Islamophobic discourses in both the social and political spaces of Europe.

## **Islamophobia and the crises of Europe's multiculturalism**

As much as his actions were chilling, some of the points made by Anders Behring Breivik in his manifesto entitled, *2083: A European Declaration of Independence* were undoubtedly timely and interesting enough to engage a whole range of different audiences across Europe. Published shortly before he launched a bomb attack on government buildings in Oslo followed soon after by a mass shooting

at a youth camp on the island of Utøya, Breivik used the manifesto to set out his rationale for taking the lives of the 77 people many of whom were teenagers. Rooted in the ideologies of the far-right and neo-Nazism, Breivik's remit was wide: endorsing extreme forms of Zionism, white nationalism and right-wing populism whilst simultaneously promoting Islamophobia, cultural conservatism and anti-feminism along the way. Underpinning all of this however were the issues that Breivik identified as the enemies of modern Europe. For him, Islam, 'cultural Marxism' and multiculturalism were the enemies; the enemies that would eventually combine to establish 'Eurabia'. Only the violent and wholesale annihilation of multiculturalism would – in Breivik's mind at least – preserve Christian Europe.

It is not only Breivik and those on the extreme fringes of Europe's political landscape that have identified multiculturalism as being wholly problematic. Across the mainstream too, multiculturalism has come under attack in recent years. Germany's Angela Merkel began the attacks in October 2010 explaining how in her country, "the approach [to build] a multicultural [society] and to live side-by-side and to enjoy each other... has failed, utterly failed". Britain's David Cameron joined the attack a few months later in February 2011:

"Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and apart from the mainstream. We've failed to provide a vision of society to which they feel they want to belong. We've even tolerated these segregated communities behaving in ways that run completely counter to our values...Frankly, we need a lot less of the passive tolerance of recent years and much more active, muscular liberalism"

In the same week, France's Nicolas Sarkozy continued, "We have been too concerned about the identity of the person who was arriving and not enough about the identity of the country that was receiving him...multiculturalism has been a failure". For those in the political elites of Europe it would seem clear: despite the fact that multiculturalism is a physical and demographic reality across vast swathes of twenty first century Europe, it is now a problem, a challenge and more potently, a threat. If Breivik is to be believed, this threat is to the very existence of Europe as we currently know it. But to what extent is this true? Given the factual reality of multicultural societies across the breadth of today's Europe – multiple peoples of different ethnicities, cultures, religions, languages and so on

living alongside each other – this chapter considers Europe's multiculturalism, what might lie at the heart of the current 'problem' and more importantly, why this is important when considering the future of Europe.

## Considering multiculturalism

Despite its widespread usage and adoption, 'multiculturalism' remains a relatively recent phenomenon in political and social theory. Standard works are little more than thirty years old (e.g. Kymlicka 1989; Young 1990). Following the demographic changes that have occurred in the past half century in much of Western Europe as a result of mass migration and other forms of immigration, 'multiculturalism' is very much a fact of society in many states given the levels of diversity and group difference that currently exists. Despite this, it is worth noting that some European states might not necessarily or self-consciously declare themselves to be. As Kelly puts it, all modern Western European states face the 'problems' of multiculturalism even if they are far from endorsing multiculturalism as a policy agenda or political ideology (Kelly 2002). Most significant is the fact that large minority communities live in relative socio-economic deprivation and struggle culturally, politically and religiously against discrimination and in the need to be recognised. Kelly describes this as being consequential of the "circumstances of multiculturalism" of which two exist (Kelly 2002:3). The first of Kelly's circumstances is 'factual multiculturalism' where more than one culture exists within the public realm and is seen to be largely uncontroversial. Whilst true, there remains a dominant culture that the majority would identify with that has the potential to fetish, essentialise or reduce minority cultures in a variety of different ways. The second circumstance is 'prescribed multiculturalism', a socio-political theory and model which seeks to apply egalitarian or libertarian principles of justice and rights as a means of trying to redress the 'problems': the consequences of group difference and conflict for example, discrimination and racism. It is this latter understanding of multiculturalism – as a prescriptive socio-political theory and model – with which this chapter is primarily concerned with.

Europe did not 'invent' the notion of multiculturalism. Drawing upon debates and political developments that were taking place in places such as Canada and the United States in the 1970s and 1980s (Kymlicka 1989; Young 1990; Taylor 1994), a handful of Western European states began to follow suit. In countries

such as the United Kingdom (UK), the Netherlands and Sweden – states that self-consciously adopted what might best be termed prescriptive multicultural socio-political models albeit with some differences – concretised ‘solutions’ to the ‘problems’ were sought to guarantee equal rights and recognition for different ethnically, culturally and religiously identified communities. Extending debates around liberal democracy, for some such as Parekh, much more was needed: multicultural states needed to support minority communities to uphold their linguistic, cultural and religious needs and to outlaw the discrimination and disadvantage they experienced because of this (Parekh 2000). However, this form of multiculturalism was not without criticism. Some advocated that the promotion of individual rights rather than those of groups or communities as in the prescriptive multicultural model would be more beneficial (Joppke 1999; Barry 2002). For them because the emphasis is on groups and communities and the identities associated with them, multiculturalism gave greater credence to particularistic identities thereby not only focusing on cultural and religious difference but so too encouraging it (Scuzzarello 2010). As some argued, this approach legitimised the desire for self-separation within some communities. Advocates of multiculturalism will often forcefully counter this by stressing the benefits of recognising a plurality of identities, deeming it to be an overriding strength (Parekh 2000; Modood et al. 2006).

In the UK, Netherlands, Sweden and elsewhere in Europe, it has been this type of prescriptive socio-political model of multiculturalism that has been established. In the Netherlands, this emerged out of the *Minderbedennota*, a policy that was ratified by Parliament in 1983 on the basis that Dutch society had become multiethnic and so both majority and minority communities should live together in harmony and mutual respect. The goals of this were: emancipation; equality; and equal opportunity (Carle 2005). In Sweden, the principles of *jämlikhet* (equality), *valfrihet* (freedom of choice) and *samverkan* (partnership) were the key foundations upon which it built its immigrant policy, a policy that sought to distance and indeed reject the ‘guest worker’ strategy preferred in other Western European states especially Germany (Alund and Schierup: 1991). In the UK things were slightly different with notions of multiculturalism emerging out of ideas and debates that followed the publication of the Swann report in the 1980s. It is this report that in the British context is seen to mark the formal beginning of a state endorsed multicultural model that required free choice for individuals, active support for the essential elements of the cultures and lifestyles of minority groups, and the acceptance of a framework of shared values

through which the interests of the greater good would be upheld (Bhattacharya 1998).

Whilst far from being European in its conception, the values underpinning multiculturalism undoubtedly resonated with those already present in various European liberal states and so it is unsurprising that multiculturalism was embraced across Western Europe in particular. Where individual states did adopt and individualise multiculturalism, the result was a range of different concrete social and public policies being implemented which sought to guarantee a variety of different rights and privileges for minority communities. In essence, each adopted an individualised version of 'prescribed multiculturalism'. Whilst different in policy and implementation, and indeed in the histories and heritages that shaped the respective journey towards multiculturalism – for instance some countries were former colonial powers, others were not – similarities were shown to exist. These tended to include a general policy of 'non-intervention', where different communities – shaped and determined by ethnic, national, religious, cultural or other identifiers – are seen to deserve respect as do their differences. As Kymlicka put it, these different models based upon "liberal view[s] required freedom within the minority group and equality between the minority and majority group" (Kymlicka 1995:117). However, Kymlicka was also quick to warn of the potential consequences of this type of approach: "In cases where the national minority is illiberal, this means that the majority will be unable to prevent the violation of individual rights within the minority community. Liberals in the majority group will have to learn to live with this" (Kymlicka 1995:168). To explore this in more detail and to try and better understand the crises of multiculturalism in today's Europe, a case study on the crisis of multiculturalism in the UK is followed by a consideration of the same issues elsewhere in Europe.

## **The crisis of multiculturalism in the UK**

In trying to understand the 'crisis' of multiculturalism in contemporary Britain, it is necessary to consider the debates that took place in both the public and political spaces following the London terror attacks in July 2005 ('7/7'). The central tenet of the British 'crisis' focused on how 7/7 had not only catalysed but so too brought about the 'death of multiculturalism'. As Modood noted, in the 12 weeks following the terrorist atrocities a significant number of different commentators used the events as a springboard from which to espouse their

arguments against multiculturalism (Modood 2005). Included amongst these were Gilles Kepel suggesting the bombers had smashed multiculturalism ‘to smithereens’ and Trevor Phillips – chair of the then national race equality watchdog, the Commission for Racial Equality – who questioned whether, in the context of an ‘anything goes’ multiculturalism, Britain had focused too much on the ‘multi’ and not enough on the ‘common’. Numerous other politicians, commentators and institutional voices entered the debate and suggested similar. But as Parekh noted, underpinning the attacks on multiculturalism – whether implied or simply assumed – were closely veiled attacks on Muslims and Islam. For him, the ‘crisis of multiculturalism’ debates that followed 7/7 were little more than a polite code for addressing what many saw was the ‘problem’ posed by Muslims and Islam in Britain (Parekh 2000). More recently and more widely, Breivik also made this connection albeit far more explicitly.

In the British setting, much of the debate around the crisis of multiculturalism became synonymous with softer manifestations of Islamophobia, where discourses disproportionately focused on the perceived threat Muslims and Islam were seen to be posing to ‘our’ culture, ‘our’ values, ‘our’ institutions, and ‘our’ way of life (Allen 2005). Whether overt or covert, Muslims and Islam had become inculpably blamed for the ills of contemporary British society. Interestingly, from across the political spectrum, extremely similar arguments and justifications against Muslims and Islam emerged. Voices from across the political spectrum were beginning to perceive Muslims and Islam as making politically exceptional, culturally unreasonable and theologically alien demands on the state (Modood 2006). Following a series of highly publicised terror raids and an additional number of failed or thwarted terror attacks, debates about the role and responsibilities of Muslims and Islam intensified. Consequently, this questioning has continued and has sought to ask whether Muslims can be – or indeed ever will be – an integrated part of a modern, egalitarian, society. Maybe the question that some had wanted to ask was whether Muslims can – or indeed ever will be – an integrated of a multicultural society?

Against this backdrop, two loosely defined and politically categorised anti-Muslim, anti-Islam ideologies begun to emerge. The first was more explicit, overt and formally structured from what might be termed the ‘far-right milieu’. In Britain, this has comprised organisations that traditionally sat on the extreme, nationalist end of the political spectrum. Seen for example in the British National Party (‘BNP’), its campaigns called for ‘Islam out of Britain’ and the need for a ‘referendum’ on the future of Islam in Britain. Making unprecedented

electoral gains at local, London and European levels in the aftermath of 7/7, the BNP was extremely successful in finding political resonance with a significant part of the population. Despite unprecedented success at the local and European levels, it failed to translate this success into national electoral gains and in the past few years has begun to fracture under the weight of responsibility and relative political respectability. Even more recently however, there are signs that the BNP is once more strengthening. Also within the 'far-right milieu' is the English Defence League ('EDL'). Established around four years ago, it grew rapidly and at its zenith had the capability to mobilise up to 3,000 supporters to march through towns and cities in protest of the 'Islamification of Britain'. It is this group that Breivik is alleged to have been in dialogue with in relation to his views about Muslims, Islam and the 'Islamisation' of Europe. For the EDL, Islam and Muslim difference – 'their' innate difference from 'us' – is where the problem lies. As with the BNP, the EDL too has begun to fracture into, at times, more violent and more extreme splinter groups each of whom have a clear anti-Muslim, anti-Islam ideology at its core.

The second emergent ideology is far more implicit, and lacks the more formal structures and organisations of the far-right milieu. Linked by ideologically informed discourses and rhetoric, this might be termed 'secular liberalist'. Possibly reflecting Kymlicka's dilemma facing liberals, of 'learning to live with' what they perceive to be illiberalism, the ideological messages and meanings of the secular liberalists are typically hidden behind or embedded within debates and arguments associated with other issues. Voices from within the secular liberalist have tended to associate the 'crises' of multiculturalism with other social and political issues, including those relating to immigration, integration, community cohesion and the erosion of liberal values especially freedom of speech and equality. Voices that one might be understood as operating within this category include the columnist Polly Toynbee and her suggestion that she was an 'Islamophobe' and proud (Allen 2010), the editor of left leaning magazine David Goodhart and the inference of Muslims with 'stranger citizens' (Allen 2007), and those such as the former Home Secretary Jack Straw and his suggestion that the niqab – face veil – was a blanket barrier to integration (Allen 2010). Because the arguments and ideas put forward are typically far more implied, secular liberalist questions about Muslims and Islam are far more likely to go unnoticed or unrecognised in comparison to its far-right opposite (Allen 2007). More so, secular liberalist notions of the 'problems' of Muslims and Islam tend to be rooted in the values that sit at the heart of the modern liberal state and so tend to acquire a much

wider public and political support, including from those operating within the mainstream of the political state. Across Europe, other discourses which emerge from the secular liberalist perspective include those relating to the perceived notion of ‘Eurabia’ or the ‘Islamisation’ of Europe, both of which have a direct resonance with similar ideas emerging from the far-right.

## Beyond Britain

These processes are far from limited to the British setting. In both the Netherlands and Sweden for instance, there are many similarities. At the political level in the Netherlands, *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* (LPF) made significant political inroads. Pim Fortuyn, its assassinated leader, campaigned by calling Islam ‘a backward culture’ and stating that he would close Dutch borders to Muslim immigrants if it were legal. Fortuyn also spoke about the ‘Islamisation of Europe’. Interestingly though, Fortuyn would not have placed himself within the ‘far-right milieu’. Instead Fortuyn described himself as a ‘socialist’ and so might more appropriately sit within the secular liberalist ideologies. More typical of this ideological standpoint would be Somali-born Ayaan Hirsi Ali. A feminist who scripted the controversial film ‘*Submission*’ by Theo Van Gogh – who was himself murdered in protest of his film – Hirsi Ali has argued that Islam is incompatible with democracy and Western culture. More recently, politician Geert Wilders – who courted controversy with his controversial film, ‘*Fitna*’ – recently saw his *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (PVV) emerge as the third largest political party in the Dutch parliamentary elections in 2010, support that some have argued was on the back of his stance against Muslims and Islam.

In Sweden, and as with the PVV in the Netherlands, the *Sverigedemokraterna* (SD) achieved unprecedented success in 2010 national elections in ways where the more traditional lines between the political right and left were blurred. Being the first time the SD or any political organisation from the right had attracted enough votes to cross the necessary threshold to gain parliamentary representation, the success of the SD is entirely new in the Swedish context. Campaigning that Sweden’s multiculturalism and multicultural policies had failed, the SD asserted that Sweden’s approach to immigration and integration had threatened national identity and had destroyed social cohesion. Its identification of the ‘problem’ underlying the crisis of multiculturalism was clear: a banned advertisement for the SD showed a race between women in burqas with an elderly indigenous

Swedish woman for state benefits. As elsewhere, debates have also emerged from the centre and left of the public and political spaces following a series of death threats – and subsequent arrests – made to Lars Vilks, a Swedish artist who produced a series of drawings of the Prophet Muhammad as a dog. Following the angry response from Muslims both in Sweden and elsewhere in the world, much was made of the need to stand up for freedom of expression not least because it is enshrined in the Swedish constitution.

In other European countries too, similar has occurred. For instance in Denmark, a country placed under the international spotlight following the publication of cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad in January 2006, the Prime Minister has in the past publicly criticised Muslims for unnecessarily taking up to 'four' prayer breaks at work each day whilst the *Dansk Folkeparti* (Danish People's Party) has been reported to the police for hate speech crimes. Danish political spaces are dominated by tests of loyalty: the requirement of Muslims to pledge their allegiance to the Danish constitution over and above the Qur'an; the establishment of legal criteria to restrict Danish citizens or residents from bringing spouses into the country from elsewhere in the world; and the need for all immigrants to show a stronger cultural connection to Denmark than any other country or entity. Without going into the debates about the publication of cartoons in the *Jyllands-Posten*, what is interesting is that one year after the original publication of the cartoons a video was aired in the Danish media that showed youth members of the *Dansk Folkeparti* engaged in a contest to draw pictures that insult Muhammad. Whilst the government roundly condemned the video's contents, a group named 'Defending Denmark' claimed that they had made the video to expose the extreme right wing associations of the party and its ongoing vitriol against Muslims and Islam. More recently, Lars Loekke Rasmussen has joined in the debate about Muslims and Islam by asserting that the 'face veil' has no place in Denmark. Other similar assertions and ideas can be seen in Austria, Belgium, France, Italy and Switzerland amongst others.

## Inferring Islamophobia

In each of these settings, the prescriptive multicultural socio-political model is seen to be in crisis. Not just in crisis, but in each setting Muslims and Islam are implicated as agents for blame with debates and discussions ongoing in both

the left and right of the political spectrum. For the right, it is easier for voices and organisations to elaborate on their thinking and ideologies. Not so however for the left. Historically, those from within the left have been at the forefront of combating discrimination and prejudices and so are seemingly horrified by the populism of the right's what might be deemed racist ideologies. But as can be seen emerging across the European landscape, multicultural tolerance and the respect of differences has, as Kymlicka warned, its limits. As Slavoj Žižek recently put it, today's tolerant liberal multiculturalism requires an experience of the Other that is deprived of its Otherness; describing it as the requiring of an experience of the decaffeinated Other (Žižek 2011). This can be clearly seen in the consensus communicated by Merkel, Cameron and Sarkozy. But so too can it be seen in the more overt and chilling rhetoric and discourses of the far-right, the neo-Nazis, of Breivik even. It would be nonsensical to imply that Merkel et al were the same as Breivik and his ilk, but what is evident is the notion that multiculturalism is presenting a threat to Europe and its individual states. At all levels, this is then impacting and influencing the political ideas and ideologies emerging from both the left and right of the traditional political divides.

Because of this, the social, political and policy trends emerging across the different states is new and untested in Europe. The banning of the face veil in France and Belgium and the banning of the building of minarets in Switzerland are seeming evidence of this. Elsewhere, similar policy developments are either awaiting implementation or are under ongoing consideration. How these develop and what impact they might have on the social, political and policy spaces of these different multicultural states – and on the notion of multiculturalism more widely – is as yet unknown. But what is clear is that underpinning the perceived crises of multiculturalism – and the 'problems' attributed with these – is that Muslims and Islam are being inculpably blamed and targeted. As the Commission on British Muslims & Islamophobia noted almost a decade and half ago, not only was the hostility and hatred towards Islam and Muslims becoming "more explicit, more extreme and more dangerous" (CBMI: p. 1) but so too were "organisations and individuals known for their liberalism and anti-racism [being seen to] express prejudice against Islam and Muslims" (CBMI: p. 15). It added: "...What is new [about Islamophobia] is the way it is articulated by those sections of society who claim the mantle of secularism, liberalism and tolerance...They preach equality for all, yet turn a blind eye to the fact that this society offers only unequal opportunities for Muslims" (CBMI: p. 15). Interestingly, this was being noted around the same time that Kymlicka was issuing his warning of the

possibility that liberals in the multicultural setting will have to 'learn to live' with what they might believe to be 'illiberal' cultures, practices, values and so on.

## Understanding Islamophobia

Islamophobia is a relatively new word for a relatively new concept; it was first used in print in its contemporary guise little more than twenty years ago. In this time, the term has been changed, manipulated, contested and dismissed in equal measure. Given its relative newness, some argue that Islamophobia – or any other form or manifestation of anti-Muslim and anti-Islam hatred – is little more than a legitimate and rational response to the events of 11 September 2001 (9/11) and other similar events that have punctuated the decade of urgent history that has followed those tragic events. But as the landmark publication of the highly determinative and influential 1997 report from the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (CBMI) highlighted, Islamophobia was distinctly not a post-9/11 phenomenon. Islamophobia existed as much on the 10 September 2001 as indeed it did on the 12 September 2001. As the *European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia* (EUMC) noted in its report on Islamophobia across fifteen European states following the attacks on New York and Washington, "Much of what occurred post-September 11 drew heavily upon pre-existent manifestations of widespread Islamophobic and xenophobic attitudes" (Allen and Nielsen 2002). It went on, 9/11 merely "gave a pre-existent prejudice a much greater credibility and validity" (Allen and Nielsen 2002: 42).

There can though be little doubt about the significance and impact of 9/11 and the way in which similar incidents since have continued to shape and determine how not just Islam and Muslims have been perceived, but more so the phenomenon of Islamophobia. At whatever level – national, political, institutional, community – the legacy of 9/11 is never far from view and this is true of the contemporary European landscape as also North America and elsewhere. So too is there little doubt about the way in which 9/11 and its legacy has fed the growing spectre of Islamophobia and with it, the rising incidence and proliferation of anti-Muslim hate crimes. Without the past decade – and not because of it, it has to be stressed – it is right to question whether the atrocities committed by Breivik would ever have taken place. Yet this same decade has been one where the very notion of Islamophobia – at times, even the merest recognition – has been routinely derided and dismissed, rarely if indeed ever being given the

credence and seriousness of concern that such a dangerous phenomenon clearly deserves. Perceiving Islamophobia in the way that it has for the past decade has allowed for detractors and those who simply do not care to make simplistic assumptions: stop the terrorism and the Islamophobia will stop also. Sadly, such simplistic views are far from helpful, not least because the thinking and rationale underpinning them is flawed.

It would be wrong to suggest that nothing has been done to try and counter Islamophobia. In some countries, different legislative measures and policies have been implemented, various political debates have been undertaken and a number of Europe-wide reports have been commissioned amongst others. So too have other initiatives been established, by Muslim groups and organisations, by other faith groups and communities concerned by the rise in religious-driven hatred and hostility, and by those who campaign for greater equality and for the protection of human rights. Others too have been receptive to the threat of Islamophobia. Whichever way one reflects upon the outcomes and events of what began with the publication of the CBMI report and duly accelerated by 9/11, it cannot be argued that the language, discourse, notion and concept of Islamophobia has failed to acquire a contemporary British, European and global relevance: the latter emerging in particular following the debates around the 'Ground Zero' mosque and the proposed burning of the Qur'an by the American Christian minister Terry Jones, both in 2010.

There would also appear to be a concurrent process being played out, where despite Islamophobia either discursively or conceptually becoming increasingly referenced, referred to and spoken about, there also appears to be a distinct lack of clarity and understanding about Islamophobia: about what it is, what it is not and what can be done about it. The asking of these questions so far has resulted in further contestation and confusion: about definition, usage, meaning and ownership. There remains therefore a clear need for further investigation not least about what is 'Islamophobia'. Improving understanding about Islamophobia cannot merely be a process of constructing simplistic definitions that allow easy criteria that hope to identify whether or not something is Islamophobic. If defined too broadly, then Islamophobia will escape censure where meaningless definitions and conceptualisations will become over-inflated and remove any concretised or empirical grounding. If the definition is without grounding, then discourses that would otherwise be regarded as socially unacceptable will begin to attain social legitimacy as well as political agency. Through political agency, Islamophobia might then become implicitly shrouded beneath the cover of

nationalism and national belonging for instance, in preference of explicit or overt manifestations of racism or Islamophobia, even though the resultant consequence or impact might be very much the same. Likewise, if overly simple definitions and conceptualisations are put forward, overly simple – and overly inadequate – solutions will ensue, culminating in a similar situation to that which has already been established. In addition, both the definition and purported solution obscures the specificity and complexity of the phenomenon; undermining, hindering and even negating the problem whilst supporting further contestation.

Recognising the complexity of this, recent research has put forward the suggestion that Islamophobia is a threefold ideological phenomenon, one where Islamophobia becomes conceived and evident in the form of systems of thought and meaning as well as through systems of signifiers or symbols which pertain to influence, impact upon or inform the social consensus about 'the Other' (Allen 2010). Employing this model, Islamophobia is not necessarily restricted to any specific action, practice, discrimination or prejudice but instead gives meaning to that which is widely accepted as natural and normative of Muslims, Islam or both. As Clarke explains in terms of the function of ideology, this "creates a form of order, who we are, or perhaps more precisely who we are not, by the stigmatisation, marginalisation and intolerance associated with this" (Clarke 2003:15). On the basis of this 'form of order', so discrimination and prejudice can be duly founded upon inaccuracies, misunderstandings and misrepresentations as indeed it can upon accurate, correctly understood and true representations of Muslims or Islam: all become seen to be 'normative truths' whether that be the case or not (Allen 2010). If a 'form of order' is therefore created that establishes Muslims and Islam as being 'who we are not', it would appear that this would be Islamophobia.

If Islamophobia is ideological, and thereby the first component of the broader phenomenon, then it must function as such, where ideological content – meaning about Muslims and Islam – must be disseminated to the public and private spaces: through a vast range of different actions, utterances, images and texts that are recognised and digested as meaningful by its recipients. In this instance, both dissemination and reception are as equally important. To achieve this, the second component of Islamophobia is the 'modes of operation' through which meaning is sustained and perpetuated. It is imperative to stress though, that modes of operation are not equitable with the symbolic forms through which Muslims and Islam are either identified or recognised. These modes and strategies nor are neither concretised nor unchanging, and so new modes and strategies

may at some stage appear whilst others may similarly disappear, be replaced or substituted: this can occur also in different geographical, cultural, social and so on settings. Neither the modes nor strategies are in themselves ideological: they only sustain ideological meaning, whether intentional or otherwise. The final component of Islamophobia is exclusionary practices: practices that seek to disadvantage, prejudice or discriminate against Muslims and Islam in social, economic and political spheres. Exclusionary practices must also include the subjection to violence as a tool of exclusion. Interestingly, these are all things that prescribed multiculturalism sought to eradicate.

### **Making it ‘reasonable’**

In many ways, the ideologies of Breivik and others from the far-right milieu are far from extraordinary. This is not to say that the atrocities committed by Breivik are not extraordinary: they are, and must serve as a timely reminder of the very real threat that the ‘lone wolf’ extremist presents to our security in today’s Europe. What is extraordinary however is the resonance that the ideologies of the political mainstream – the centre left and right – has in relation to multiculturalism with those on the far and extreme right. But even acknowledging this contributes towards the relative smokescreen that is being created by multiculturalism. In many ways, the crises of multiculturalism are mere smokescreens for what many are seeing as the ‘problems’ attributed to the presence and visibility of Islam and Muslims in Europe and the Islamophobia which underpins this. Zizak again provides some insight. Referencing the French fascist intellectual Robert Brasillach, Zizak reflects on Brasillach’s ‘reasonable antisemitism’:

“We don’t want to kill anyone, we don’t want to organise any pogrom. But we also think that the best way to hinder the always unpredictable actions of instinctual antisemitism is to organise a reasonable antisemitism” (Zizak 2011).

In today’s Europe it might be argued that something similar is occurring but in terms of a ‘reasonable’ Islamophobia. Having upheld the need for minority rights, for equality, justice and welfare support as being necessary values of our European heritages and histories, increasingly we are moving away from these – rejecting them even – to endorse policies that are discriminatory, divisive and

damaging. To make them more palatable – to differentiate them from the less palatable versions of the far-right – the mainstream politicians and others speak about ‘problems,’ implied enough for most to be able to understand and accept, to make them appear legitimate, rational and as Brasillach might have put it, ‘reasonable’.

If, as the discourses and rhetoric suggest, we are moving into an era that goes beyond multiculturalism – post-multiculturalism according to Steven Vertovec – then it is essential that we do not lose sight of the values that made Europe embrace multiculturalism and its politics. Reject multiculturalism and banish the ‘M-word’ from our lexicon if necessary; Europe can cope with that. But in doing so, let us not reject and banish the values that were behind why we once embraced multiculturalism and its socio-political policies and practices. More importantly, it is essential that this does not allow for a space to be created where the antithesis of multicultural values are allowed to ferment and manifest in the form of a ‘reasonable’ Islamophobia. The ‘crises’ of multiculturalism will not be solved by endorsing Islamophobia, whether from the right, left or centre of the political spectrum. Despite the assertions of Breivik and others from within the far-right milieu, it is not the presence of Muslims and Islam in Europe that presents the greatest threat. Instead, it is the rejection and loss of the values that are at the very heart of multiculturalism that presents the greatest threat to the future of Europe: to who we are, what our values and culture might be.

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