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Glorious, Accursed Europe

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EUROPE, OLD OR NEW?

Europe on the Brink was the name of a special program aired on Kol Israel's *Reshet Bet* radio channel on February 2 and March 3, 2004. According to the program, Europe stood on the brink of "antisemitism, Islamic terror, incitement against the State of Israel, and the precarious conditions of Jews in European communities." In other words, Europe was depicted here from a Jewish and Israeli perspective. Once again, a portrait emerged of Europe as a decadent, superficial, vacuous, and materialistic culture. This was Old Europe, where—behind a facade of enlightenment, rational intellect, tolerance, and liberalism—the destructive forces of nationalism, racism, human-rights violations, aggressive imperialism, and of course antisemitism were and had always been present, the latter a fatal, incurable illness. The question was by what right had Europe placed itself at the head of the international moral order, dispensed advice, and judged and sentenced others for their crimes. It was, after all, a continent where during the 200 years from the French Revolution and Napoleon to the civil war in the former Yugoslavia, many tens of millions—or even more—had been killed, slaughtered, and murdered. Were these horrors atoned for by the fact that Europe had created lofty cultural assets now consumed by the entire civilized world?¹ Overall, Europe was simply deluding itself—and tempting others to accept the delusion—that it was now a new world that had managed to shed all the evils of its past.

Some of the motifs of this image of Europe are common to the Jewish critique and the general anti-Western position, including the picture presented by extremist conservative groups in Europe itself and in the United States. An example is the nightmarish vision put forth by Patrick Buchanan, the right-wing presidential candidate, in his 2002 book *The Death of the West: How Dying Populations and Immigrant Invasions Imperil Our Country and Civilization*.² According to his vision, Western Europe is a dying society that has lost its will to live, and whose economic prosperity is fragile. In contrast to critiques issuing from these circles, the criticism

from Israel and the Jewish world is generally devoid of *schadenfreude* or the anticipation of aging Europe's inevitable decline. Concern for Europe's future is frequently expressed, as is the hope that it will extricate itself from its state of decline and return to its senses and its status as the pinnacle of culture.

It is probably for this reason that conflicting responses were expressed within the Israeli discourse to the rejection of the European constitution in May 2005. Some considered the rejection merely a delay caused by social and economic problems in certain countries, arguing that there was a solid foundation for the existence of a Europe without borders. However, others believed that the causes for the rejection were a profound fear of change, a manifestation of popular nationalistic sentiments that refused to accept the bureaucratic vision of politicians, and racism. Some believed that what they considered a revival of European nationalism legitimized Jewish nationalism in Palestine; the rejection of the constitution was incontrovertible evidence that the age of nationalism was still alive. Europe, however, knows how to beguile its would-be prophets. In any case, we should not rush to evaluate Europe's future according to political upheavals while ignoring long-term trends.³

Apocalyptic descriptions of Europe in the present, and of its future destiny, are almost nonexistent in the Jewish public discourse from the end of World War II to nearly the last quarter of the twentieth century. Occasionally, a prophecy appeared of Europe's decline, in the spirit of the pessimistic prophets prior to World War II; there were also expressions of sweeping hatred for the West and all it represented,⁴ similar to sentiments expressed in the anti-Western literature of the postcolonial world. These prophecies arose, in general, as part of an attempt to formulate a historiosophical doctrine on which to base an essentialist ideology for the revival of an original, ideal Jewish culture diametrically opposed to Europe. In contrast to the vision of a Europe in decline, an eschatological vision was presented of the revival of a modern, authentic Judaism in Palestine. This vision stemmed from a recognition of the immense influence of European culture on modern Jewish culture, and from the desire to escape the former. One example of this attitude is the bleak picture drawn by Eliezer Livneh, previously a prominent ideologue for the Mapai party and, during the period in which he wrote *Israel and the Crisis of Western Civilization*, a central ideologue for the Movement for Greater Israel. Livneh described a satiated, materialistic Western civilization that was decadent and dying, devoid of spirituality and unable to be saved from

the inherent crisis it faced.⁵ He concluded that Jews and Judaism had no future if they could not free themselves from the “fanatical devotion to the universal future of Western humanism.”⁶

This pessimistic picture of Europe’s decline returned to the forefront of the Jewish and Israeli public discourse during the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first—just as an opposite, optimistic picture of Europe emerged, in which religious wars and the polarization between nationalism and full-scale European revolution had disappeared decisively, and in which totalitarian regimes had passed away.⁷ Just as it seemed that Europe was at last beginning to achieve the Erasmian ideal of a common identity,⁸ it began to be portrayed in the Jewish and Israeli public discourse once again as an accursed—or at least untrustworthy—Europe.

Does this portrayal depict and judge reality from a limited point of view, or is it possible that this time—having learned from the experiences of the not-too-distant past—the Jewish seismograph has succeeded in detecting signals that others have failed to sense?

BETWEEN GERMANY AND SOVIET RUSSIA

According to the poet Uri Zvi Greenberg, Europe remained “Europe of the cross” even after the Holocaust. He did not distinguish, for example, between Poland and Germany, or between Germans and Slavs: all were part of Christianity—“our eternal enemy”—and it was from Christianity that they drew their hatred and their thirst for Jewish blood. As a result they were not “human,” but bestial. Greenberg’s decisive conclusion was that “the spirit of Europe is a deathly poison”; behind European philosophy and art there flowed, and would always flow, the “dark blood” of murderers.⁹ However, in the Israeli public discourse, Europe after World War II and the Holocaust was generally not portrayed as a dying continent, nor was it considered homogeneous. There were three main reasons for this. First, it was impossible to consider, for instance, England and the Soviet Union—two of the nations that had fought and defeated Nazi Germany—as part of the same demonic culture that had given birth to Nazism. Second, the cold war and the division of Europe into two blocs—West and East—led to a different approach toward each of them, determined according to various and sometimes extreme ideologies and political orientations. The third reason—Jews’ affinity toward Western culture and its values and assets—was too profound to allow them to uproot it entirely.

It was Germany, of course, that represented Europe's demonic side; not, however, the whole of Europe. The perception that Germany was a special case distinguished it from the other European nations, including those that had cooperated with Nazi Germany and those considered organically antisemitic. After World War II, the public discourse in Israel returned to the question of the organic nature of Germany and the Germans, but this time with far greater intensity and force. This discourse attempted to decipher the German code and determine whether Nazism was an inevitable result of the unique nature of the collective German personality and of its particular historical path (*Sonderweg*) in the context of European history. A common claim within this discourse was that Nazism was a uniquely German phenomenon that came into being as the result of the profound mythological layer embedded within the innermost soul of every German and of the unique spiritual tendencies ingrained in the German people. These inevitably led to racist antisemitism, and to the murder of the Jewish people.¹⁰

A series of antisemitic events that took place in Germany after 1945, as well as what was seen as a revival of neo-Nazi elements, only strengthened the claim that the German character was fundamentally bestial, and that this bestial foundation was destined to re-erupt during a time of crisis, again aimed first and foremost against the Jews. This outlook, primarily during the 1950s, reinforced Germany's image as a nationalistic state that was militaristic and antisemitic by nature—a nature that would never change, and toward which hatred was an Israeli duty. Representatives from both sides of the ideological and political fence expressed this claim in response to the decision of the United States, Britain, and France to reinstate a German army in the Federal Republic. Yaacov Hazan, one of the leaders of Mapam, declared in a Knesset debate in November 1954 that a neo-Nazi army was being raised in West Germany that threatened the destruction of the world and thus of Israel. According to him, this was a preliminary step toward a third world war. A representative of the Zionist Left, Yitzhak Ben-Aharon, declared that "Adenauer's Germany is a thin, transparent guise of an old man masking [the reality of] renewed neo-Nazism," while a representative of the Communist Party, Shmuel Mikonis, maintained that this was a revival of German militarism and constituted a "terrible danger to the nations of Europe and all humanity." According to him, Israel's government was increasing its "cooperation with West Germany's Nazi government." The Right also warned against German armament, but for different reasons. Arie Altman, one of the

leaders of the Herut movement, declared that “an armed Germany will fight side by side with Russia against the West,” since “the German people should be considered a threat, as Nietzsche once said.”¹¹ Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett’s response was that “all the doomsday prophecies on this matter [the ties with West Germany] have been proven entirely false for now.”¹² These claims were also raised during the debate about Israel’s arms deal with Germany in June 1959. Once more, Mikonis maintained that “the regime in West Germany today is founded on the same dark forces and the same murderous militaristic trends that characterized Hitler’s regime.” Adenauer’s Germany, he declared, was paving the way for yet another edition of the Third Reich.¹³

It should be noted that the radical and pro-Soviet Israeli Left did not object to the creation of an army in East Germany. Its stance derived from its pro-Soviet orientation and not from an essentialist perception regarding the unalterable German nature. Within the Israeli Left, in contrast to the Right, it was not an essentialist outlook that determined the attitude toward Germany after 1945, but rather the tension between historical memory, an international political orientation, and pragmatic questions of economic and political policy. In any case, the cries that German militarism would soon awake were sounded in vain. Officially, Israel did not view West Germany’s new economic and political status with trepidation. Likewise, the official position of Israel, and public opinion there, expressed almost no concern regarding the unification of the two Germanies at the end of 1990 and did not describe that unification as paving the way toward a Teutonic revival. On the contrary, they welcomed the collapse of Communist, anti-Israeli East Germany.

The question of whether West Germany was different than Nazi Germany came again to the forefront of Israeli public discourse following the reparations agreement in 1951–53, the German involvement in the arming of the Arab world, and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Germany and Israel in 1965. Again, many attempted to answer the questions of whether German culture was indeed the progenitor of Nazi Germany,¹⁴ and whether the Germans were a nation of murders. In any case, the validity of concepts such as collective spirit and national character was examined. For example, two 1967 books dealt with the question of whether West Germany was different—whether it had been able to internalize liberal and democratic values and to escape the tendency toward extreme nationalism that was imprinted on German society. The first of these books, *The Other Germany*, was written by the journalist Vera

Elyashiv; the second, *A Land Haunted by Its Past: The New Germany*, was written by the journalist and historian Amos Elon.¹⁵ In her book, Elyashiv asked: “Should we treat the Nazi regime as a German illness, or was it a human plague that just happened to break out in Germany? And if it was a German illness—is Germany now inoculated against it, or is it more susceptible than other nations?”¹⁶ Her answer was: “I did not find a new Germany, but an almost random mixture of old and new . . . The ‘sick man of Europe’ is not found today on the shores of the Bosphorus, but on the banks of the Rhine.”¹⁷ Amos Elon’s response to the same question was: “It is admittedly a new Germany, but at times it is desperately difficult to discern its true nature.”¹⁸

After 1945, several waves of neo-Nazi and antisemitic incidents and events occurred in Germany. The outbursts of this sort that broke out in 1992, after Germany’s unification, were interpreted as evidence that in the absence of a liberal and democratic tradition in Germany, militant nationalism was apt to reemerge; in any case, unification would alter Europe’s internal balance, the spiritual map of Germany, and the whole of Europe for the worse.¹⁹ It is impossible to disagree with Moshe Zimmermann’s opinion that the ambivalent attitude toward Germany was a permanent condition: “The average Israeli is trapped between two forces, two drives—on the one hand, adaptation to the new Europe, in which Germany is a central player, and on the other hand, the search for collective identity, inseparable from the memory of the Holocaust.”²⁰

Another issue that occupied the Israeli government and public opinion was the attitude toward German culture. On the level of principle, the question was whether it was possible to differentiate between Germany’s great cultural heritage—that of Goethe and Schiller, Beethoven and Brahms—and the factors and phenomena that gave rise to Nazism.²¹ On the practical level, the question was whether it was necessary or appropriate to import German cultural products (in particular, translations of German literature) and to create cultural ties with West Germany. In 1949, Gershom Schocken, *Haaretz*’s publisher and editor, who was then serving as a member of the Knesset for the Progressive Party, proposed a law that would ban most contact between Israelis and Germany and would define the special circumstances under which such contact would be allowed. In 1987, Schocken wrote: “reality trumped the memory of the Holocaust.”²² Over time, an attempt was made to differentiate between utilitarian political and economic ties and cultural ties,²³ as well as be-

tween formal, political ties and individual connections.²⁴ But cultural ties—both private and official—flourished from the end of the 1970s onward. Hatred of Germany and the Germans declined, and the debate about whether Richard Wagner’s music should be performed became the last trace of that hatred.²⁵

On the opposite pole of Europe from Germany were the Soviet Union and the Communist bloc nations. For the radical Zionist Left (Mapam and Ahdut Haavoda), the East—the Soviet Union and communism—represented the positive values of the new European culture, seen as the complete opposite of the values of the bourgeois, capitalistic, reactionist, and degenerate society found in the West, especially the United States. The Zionist Left, with its orientation toward the Soviet Union, saw Soviet culture as progressive—the preferred and desired model for a collectivist, mobilized, and centralized society that does not idolize selfish individualism and materialism. From this point of view, the Messiah had arrived in Eastern Europe, and there a new society and new humanity had arisen. The persecution of Jews in Stalinist Russia, the imprisonment of tens of thousands of Jews in gulags, the Doctors’ Plot, and the Prague trials cast almost no shadow on this image of the Soviet Union as “the world of tomorrow”—until the twentieth Congress of the Communist party in February 1956.²⁶

In addition to this political orientation toward the Soviet Union and its political and social ideology, the Soviet cultural models had a large influence on Hebrew culture during the Yishuv period and particularly, during the 1950s, on well-defined segments of Israeli society, mainly those belonging to the “Marxist Left,” and, among other things, on the choice of translated literature and imported art.²⁷ However, in the end, the Leftist anti-Western ideology was unable to prevent Israeli society from becoming increasingly bourgeois or the increasing Americanization of its culture.

In contrast, from the beginning of the 1950s to the start of the 1990s, some Israelis warned that the Jews of the Soviet Union were facing death because of the official antisemitic policy. This apocalyptic picture turned out to be baseless. There is, of course, great irony in the fact that there were those who feared the breakup of the Soviet Union—whose antisemitic policies and refusal to allow Jews to emigrate were protested by Jewish organizations and the State of Israel—because they believed that in this new reality, traditional antisemitism would rear its head and no central authority would exist to fight it.

FRANCE AND THE RETURN TO THE DREYFUS TRIAL

At the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, France was the symbol of accursed Europe. This image was the result of a long chain of antisemitic events whose motives and severity, and the danger they posed to French Jews, are a matter of dispute.²⁸ (On July 8, 2004, the French president Jacques Chirac also admitted that antisemitism and racism, including Islamophobia, were a threat to French unity.²⁹)

The sources and causes of antisemitism in France are controversial: is it traditional antisemitism, or does it stem from opposition to Zionism, or criticism of Israeli policies on the Palestinian question? Does that criticism arise from and serve as justification for an antisemitic position, or is the criticism legitimate? Is this antisemitism French—whether it issues from the Left, the Right, or both camps—or was it imported to France by its six million Muslim immigrants, estimated to be 10 percent of the population? And, in the latter case, is the antisemitism a reaction to the Mideast conflict, or the result of the crisis brought about by the Muslim population's integration into the French Republic and its values? In any case, the antisemitic incidents in France stirred fear because they were at odds with the political and cultural tradition that France symbolizes. Thus it is no wonder that the public discourse focused on the fact that France was the spiritual birthplace of modern antisemitism,³⁰ while ignoring republican France's struggle against that antisemitism.

One of the paradoxes of this situation is that to some, the sins of Israel and its supporters, Jews around the world, appeared not necessarily as an expression of absolute evil inherent to Jews, but as a manifestation of the European ghosts, such as ethnoreligious nationalism, racism, and colonialism, that infected Zionism and Israeli society.³¹ Another paradox is the fact that some French Jews responded to evidence of antisemitism by presenting Jews as the authentic representatives of French secularism and culture—a noble cultural heritage betrayed by liberal or leftist antisemites. Others saw it as a return of the old theological anti-Judaism in new clothes. In contrast were those who claimed it was a matter of anti-Zionism or anti-Israeli sentiment, stemming from the fact that, as they saw it, the State of Israel was not acting according to Europe's exalted universal values, but had inherited the destructive worldview of the anti-Enlightenment. Their conclusion was that the only way to wipe out antisemitism as a European phenomenon was not to complete the destruction of the Jewish presence in Europe, but to model Israel's politi-

cal and cultural character on the European values of enlightenment and civil society.

In any case, the shock and fear regarding demonstrations of antisemitism in France and the future of the Jewish community there and in other Western European nations³² arise not only from concern for the welfare of Jews in those countries, but also from the fear that Europe has not rid itself of its ghosts—and that this is not a question of ghosts alone.³³

Thus we see both fear that Europe might cease to be Europe, and that it might revert to its European nature.

FROM A “JEWISH CENTURY” TO A “MUSLIM CENTURY”?

At the end of the nineteenth century, Friedrich Nietzsche wrote in *The Dawn of Day* that the twentieth century would be the one that would determine the fate of the Jews in Europe. Nietzsche, of course, never imagined through what terrible events that fate would be decided.

At the close of the twentieth century, predictions began to emerge that the following century would be the Muslim century or the century of Islam, and that Muslims would determine the fate of Europe and were likely to become its masters. Such prophecies increased steadily at the start of the twenty-first century, and the question came almost to the forefront of the political and public debates in which Europe—and the rest of the world—was engaged. These prophecies rely on what is perceived as the rising strength of radical Islam, but they are primarily due to the increase in the number of immigrants from Muslim countries who have settled in Western Europe. The size of this immigrant population in the European Union during the first decade of the twenty-first century is estimated at 4 percent of the overall population of the region, in contrast to that area’s Jewish population in 1939, which is estimated to have been 0.7 percent.³⁴

It is important to recall that the phrase “Muslim population” refers to a varied group: there are many differences between immigrants from Pakistan or Turkey, and immigrants from North Africa or the Middle East. Still, all of these groups are frequently subject to sweeping generalizations. The generalizations arise in part from the belief that “Islam has a universal history of its own and does not belong in the universal history of Europeans,” as the German philosopher Ernst Troeltsch wrote.³⁵ From this point of view, there is no validity to the claim that, in comparison

to Islam's intellectual influence on medieval Europe (primarily Spain) and its contributions to Europe's development, the Muslim world in the twenty-first century has no intellectual assets to contribute to the West. On the contrary, although Islam did not have much influence on Europe's religious development during the Middle Ages, it was still considered a military and even existential threat; the main threat Islam is thought to pose in the twenty-first century is a religious one.

Thus, as we have written in the introduction, a nightmare vision has begun to spread in Europe according to which the millions of Muslim immigrants are new barbarians, camped not beyond the city walls but within the city itself. All this is an outcome of the fact that in previous centuries, Europe had sent tens of millions of migrants to other continents; now it finds itself filled with migrants from those same countries in Asia and Africa, whose presence counters the decline in European birthrates. In just a short time, the warnings say, France will find itself struggling to preserve its French identity,³⁶ London will become Londonistan,³⁷ Germany will turn into Mecca,³⁸ and Europe itself will become a Muslim colony. According to these prophecies, we are currently witnessing the twilight of Europe's existence as a historical and cultural entity.³⁹

The fact that this new wave of prophecy also flows from Jewish pens is not surprising. What is surprising is that their essays are invited to lead the charge in demanding that Europe reassert itself in order to save itself before it is too late. These writers make such statements, no doubt, out of concern for the fate of the Jews in Western Europe, as well as for the fate of Israel; however, it is impossible to shake the historical irony that clings to this phenomenon, in which it is the Jews, of all people, who prod Europe to save itself from Muslim encroachment—when it was Europe that, in the twentieth century, declared war against the Jewish people, which it described as an Asiatic, Semitic, and foreign race encroaching on a culture that was not its own, and even attempting to control it from within. The irony is that the warning cries against Europe's Islamization fundamentally resemble the anti-Jewish literature that was published in the nineteenth century to fight the *verjudung* (Judaization) of Europe.

We are confronted with a play of historical irony acted by Christians and Jews who consider themselves partners in the struggle against radical Islam in the name of the shared values of Judeo-Christian civilization—or, in other words, of Western culture.⁴⁰ Indeed, a fascinating historical metamorphosis has occurred. In the Middle Ages, particularly during

the Crusades, the Christian anti-Jewish literature found similarities between Muslims—the external foe—and Jews, the enemy from within. Both were infidels; both had negative and even demonic inherent traits attributed to them.⁴¹ Later, thinking of the Jews' role in the translation of Greek philosophical works into Latin, the American Jewish historian Ismar Schorsch wrote: "Paradoxically the contact with Islam had made Judaism part of the Western world."⁴² At the same time, in the twenty-first century, there appears to be no connection between European Islamophobia and European antisemitism; on the contrary, the hostility between Jews and Muslims created a complete separation between them in the European consciousness. Yet, the Muslim presence in Europe is perceived to be one of the primary factors feeding the new antisemitism in Europe. In other words, Islam is a new source for the tradition of inherent antisemitism in Europe.

Are we then faced with a phenomenon that confirms Claude Lévi-Strauss's statement that "it is not the resemblance, but the differences which resemble each other"?⁴³ Is there any similarity between the Jewish and Muslim cases that might lead us to claim that Muslims are Europe's new Jews—a foreign, threatening other?⁴⁴ It is impossible not to notice the similarity between the old descriptions of Jews who migrated from Eastern and Central Europe to Western Europe, carrying the Middle Ages with them, and the descriptions of Muslim immigrants today. There are also nearly identical descriptions expressing wonder at how much like average Europeans past Jewish immigrants and present Muslim immigrants seemed.

However, the profound difference is not only that Muslims have a sizeable home front of Muslim nations, or that radical Islam has an ideological position regarding the sinking of the degenerate West and the Islamic mission to conquer it both physically and spiritually, and impose Islam on Europe. It should be noted that such a perception of the extension of *Dar al-Islam* (the Islamic world) to the West is both similar to and entirely different from the belief of the liberal Jewish minority in nineteenth-century Germany that the Jewish people had a mission to disseminate the idea of ethical monotheism, as well as many Jews' participation in radical movements that aimed to change the face of Europe. Instead, the great difference lies in the nature of Europe. Before World War II, there were Jews in Europe who wished to differentiate themselves from European society, and to preserve autonomous and separate communal frameworks; in contrast, other Jews searched for different methods of integration in

European culture and society, with some success. At the same time, there were Jews who tried, and in large measure succeeded, to consolidate a new model and new formula for an aterritorial national existence. The Muslim nationalist perception today is roughly similar to that nationalist perception of a nation without need for specific territory; however, while Judaism is the faith of a single people, Islam is the faith of many, and this idea is the basis for a broad concept of integration. Moreover, there is no Muslim concept of exile or diaspora; nor has there been any sort of Muslim Zionism—a call for an organized return to Muslim lands.

Yet another difference exists. It is accepted in the scholarship of this field that modern antisemitism was, among other things, a reaction to Jews' emancipation and integration in Christian European society. Jews were perceived not only as foreign and different, but as guileful—as a people capable of masquerading as Europeans despite their fundamental and essential difference.⁴⁵ In other words, modern antisemitism was not aimed against Orthodox Jews, who were distinguishable from the general European population not only by their religion but by their dress and lifestyle. Instead, it was aimed at those whose external differences from their European counterparts were blurred or even absent. The question in this context is whether Islamophobia is aimed only at Muslims who maintain a distinctive lifestyle and dress, and even emphasize their differences, or whether it also applies to Muslims who have become secularized and undergone the process of assimilation.

In Europe during the latter half of the twentieth century, the beliefs in *Volk*—in what is often called “race, blood, and soil”—diminished considerably. Religious influence weakened, and Europe became in large part an overtly secular continent. In contrast, the principle of multiculturalism grew in strength and reinforces an awareness of guilt relating to Europe's misdeeds in the age of colonialism and imperialism. On the one hand, this reality simplifies the processes of integration and acculturation that new immigrants face in Europe; on the other hand, though, it encourages not acculturation and integration, but rather maintains individuality and even self-segregation. It should also be noted that, in contrast to Jews, Muslims lack the centuries-old experience of life in exile under a non-Muslim rule—and certainly not as part of a non-Muslim, secular society. It is clear that their theological, ideological, and practical efforts at expressing their new reality have only just begun. In any case, in today's secular European society, Muslims are the most conspicuous religious element, and the mosque has replaced the church as the religious institution

that attracts the masses. It is thus no wonder that there are those who see European liberalism—the ideology of multiculturalism that is opposed to any expression of Eurocentrism—and the idea that the Muslim world was no less Europe’s victim than were the Jews as the causes of Europe’s political weakness in its approach to the Muslim world, as well as its weakness with respect to the so-called Islamic invasion of Europe (they ignore the sizable contribution of religion to European antisemitism). The calls for Europe to defend its identity do not necessarily demand a defense of the principles of the Enlightenment, but rather a return to nationalism’s Romantic idealism.

Like the Jews, Europe’s heterogeneous Muslim population observes various patterns of existence within European society, develops different existential ideologies, and essentially proposes similar solutions. We might therefore say that the Jewish experience in Europe could shed light on the nature of the Muslim experience there; however, the Jewish experience cannot predict the twists and turns of the Muslim century, or where the latter will lead Europe and its Muslim population. All that can be said is that in the twenty-first century, the Muslim Question has inherited the place of the Jewish Question as a European problem—a problem that will affect not only the situation of European Muslims, but also the various moods and streams of thought that will lead to various opinions of the meaning of European identity.

Will Europe, then, become Muslim or post-Western, as some doomsayers and skeptics prophesy? Predictions regarding Muslims and Islam form a rich and complex repertoire that has not always proven itself. Prophecies of decline and revival do not emerge one after the other, imitating the swing of a pendulum; rather, they appear side by side. Europe’s Muslim population will not form a single nation; it will branch out into different streams, each with its own outlook and its own way of life.