



Islam, Europe's Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural, and Political Landscape

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Today there are at least 15 million people in Western Europe who adhere to the Muslim faith or have close cultural or other affiliations with the Islamic world. Indeed, in the course of a few decades, Islam has emerged as Europe's second religion, after Christianity. What is remarkable about this phenomenon is that it has occurred gradually, generally peacefully, and, in some measure, as a consequence of the economic needs of European countries.

Despite some difficulties, Islam is slowly but inexorably becoming part of Europe's social, cultural, and, to some degree, political landscape. The question today is not can Islam be uprooted and expelled from European soil, as was done six centuries ago during the period of Reconquista in Spain, but rather what is the best way of accommodating Islam in Europe and establishing cooperative relations between Muslims and the followers of other religious and/or secular value systems. This volume examines the situation and attempts to provide answers to these questions through a country-by-country analysis by recognized experts from each of the Western European nations examined. An invaluable resource and text for scholars, students, and other researchers involved with Islamic and European Studies.

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- Rank: #1911581 in eBooks
- Published on: 2002-07-30
- Released on: 2002-06-30
- Format: Kindle eBook



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Editorial Review

Review

"This is a timely study, extremely useful for understanding Islam in Europe and its role as the second largest religion, with nearly 15 million followers. bHighly Recommended. All levels and collections."-Choice

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"This excellent survey of Europe's growing Islamic communities presents a comprehensive picture of their diversity and complexity. It provides valuable insights into the often difficult process of mutual adaptation and accommodation between European societies and burgeoning Muslim populations. Without minimizing the continuing challenges and difficulties in integrating Islam into Europe's social, cultural and political landscape, this book underscores some encouraging trends that should be nurtured."-Ambassador Hugo Paemen former Head, Delegation of the European Commission United States

"This volume offers an expert, balanced view of the complex situation of European Muslims. It brings together a number of penetrating studies that document the challenges to Europe as it is simultaneously pulled in the direction of greater integration from above and pushed by profound demographic and social transformations from below. The impressive breadth of coverage and the consistently sensible analysis give this work both immediacy and gravity: it is compelling on the dilemmas and opportunities of Muslim integration, and sharply observant on the implications of mutual accommodation for the future of two world forces--European social democracy and Islam itself."-James Piscatori Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies

"The new Europe faces two major challenges as it reshapes itself in this new century: the external challenge of enlargement and the internal challenge of immigration and assimilation of minorities. Islam, Europe's Second Religion goes to the heart of the second of these while having implications for the first as well. It deals with all the key issues: demographic change, the political and cultural identity of Europe, its ability to remain competitive in a global economy, the extent and limits of its tolerance for minorities, and its vulnerability to political extremism. Anyone who wishes to understand the emerging new Europe needs to read this excellent study."-Stephen F. Szabo The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies Johns Hopkins University

About the Author

SHIREEN T. HUNTER is Director of the Islam Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). Hunter is the author or editor of five previous books, including *The Future of Islam and the West* (Praeger/CSIS, 1998) and *Central Asia Since Independence* (Praeger/CSIS, 1996).

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