

WHILE
EUROPE
SLEPT

HOW RADICAL ISLAM
IS DESTROYING THE WEST
FROM WITHIN

B R U C E B A W E R

D O U B L E D A Y

New York London Toronto Sydney Auckland

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Before 9/11: Europe in Denial

ON THE MORNING OF November 2, 2004, I sat at my mother's kitchen table in Queens, New York, drinking instant coffee and thinking about George W. Bush and John Kerry. It was Election Day, and I was irked that since I was flying back home to Oslo that evening, I'd miss the vote count on TV

The phone rang. "Hello? Oh, yes. Just a moment." My mother held out the phone. "It's Mark." I took it.

"Mark?"

"Hi, Bruce. Have you heard about Theo van Gogh?"

"No, what?"

"He was murdered this morning."

"You're kidding."

Mark, like me, is an American with a Norwegian partner. But though he moved back to New York years ago, he still starts the day by checking the news at the Web site of NRK, Norway's national radio and TV network. Switching into Norwegian, he read me the story. Van Gogh, the Dutch filmmaker and newspaper columnist, had been shot and killed in Amsterdam. Shortly afterward, police had arrested a twenty-six-year-old Dutch-Moroccan man.

Later, I'd learn more. Van Gogh had been bicycling to work along a street called Linnaeusstraat when Mohammed Bouyeri, the Dutch-born

son of Moroccan parents and a member of a radical Muslim network, had shot him, knocking him off his bicycle. Bouyeri, wearing a long *jellaba*, pumped up to twenty additional bullets into van Gogh's body, stabbed him several times, and slit his throat. He then pinned to van Gogh's chest with a knife a five-page letter addressed to the filmmaker's collaborator, Parliament member Ayaan Hirsi Ali, quoting the Koran and promising her and several other Dutch leaders (whom he named) a similar end:

I know definitely that you, O America, will go down. I know definitely that you, O Europe, will go down. I know definitely that you, O Netherlands, will go down. I know definitely that you, O Hirsi Ali, will go down.

According to witnesses, van Gogh had said to his murderer (who at the time was living on welfare payments from the Dutch government): "Don't do it! Don't do it! Mercy! Mercy!" And: "Surely we can talk about this." The blunt, outspoken van Gogh had been an unsparing critic of European passivity in the face of fundamentalist Islam; unlike most Europeans, he'd understood the connection between the war on terror and the European integration crisis, and had called America "the last beacon of hope in a steadily darkening world." Together he and Hirsi Ali had made a short film, *Submission*—he'd directed, she'd written the script—about the mistreatment of women in Islamic cultures. Yet at the end, it seemed, even he had grasped at the Western European elite's most unshakable article of faith—the belief in peace and reconciliation through dialogue.

At first glance, Hirsi Ali might have seemed an unlikely ally for van Gogh: a vivacious Somali-born beauty who'd forsworn her native Islam, she was devoted to the preservation of Dutch democracy and the rescue of her country's Muslims—especially women—from the tyranny of their subculture. I'd read a good deal about her in the Dutch press and hoped to write about her myself; in fact, a friend of mine who worked for an Oslo think tank had arranged to meet her in The Hague the following Monday and had invited me to go along. I'd already booked the flight.

Van Gogh's murder came as a shock, even though I'd seen something like it coming for years. In 1998, I'd lived in a largely Muslim neighborhood of Amsterdam, only a block away from the radical mosque attended by Bouyeri. There I'd seen firsthand the division between the native Dutch and their country's rapidly growing Muslim minority. That divi-

sion was stark: the Dutch had the world's most tolerant, open-minded society, with full sexual equality, same-sex marriage, and libertarian policies on soft drugs and prostitution. Yet many Dutch Muslims kept that society at arm's length, despising its freedoms and clinging to a range of undemocratic traditions and prejudices.

Did Dutch officials address this problem? No. Like their politically correct counterparts across Western Europe, they responded to it mostly by churning out empty rhetoric about multicultural diversity and mutual respect—and then changing the subject. I knew that by tolerating intolerance in this way, the country was setting itself on a path to cataclysmic social confrontation; yet whenever I tried—delicately—to broach the topic, Dutch acquaintances made clear that it was off limits. They seemed not to grasp that their society, and Western Europe generally, was a house divided against itself, and that eventually things would reach the breaking point.

Then came 9/11. Most Americans were quick to understand that they were at war and recognized the need for a firm response (though there was, and continues to be, much disagreement as to whether the response decided upon was the right one). Yet while most Western European countries participated in the invasion of Afghanistan and several helped topple Saddam, America's forceful approach alienated opinion makers across the continent and opened up a philosophical gulf that sometimes seemed as wide as the Atlantic itself.

Why was there such a striking difference in perspectives between the two halves of the democratic West? One reason was that the Western European establishment—the political, media, and academic elite that articulates what we think of as "European opinion"—tended to regard all international disputes as susceptible to peaceful resolution. It was therefore ill equipped to respond usefully to sustained violence by a fierce, uncompromising adversary. Another reason was Western Europe's large immigrant communities, many of them led by fundamentalist Muslims who looked forward to the establishment in Europe of a caliphate governed according to sharia law—the law of the Koran—and who viewed Islamist terrorists as allies in a global jihad, or holy war, dedicated to that goal. A fear of inflaming minorities who took their lead from such extremists was one more reason to tread gently. Few European politicians had challenged this passivity. The Dutchman Pim Fortuyn had done so, and been murdered for it. Not even the March 2004 bombings in Madrid—"Europe's 9/11"—had fully awakened Europe's sleeping elite.

True, not all European Muslims shared the terrorists' goals and

loyalties. Many, one gathered, were grateful to be living in democracies. Yet even they seemed hamstrung by the belief that loyalty to the *umma* (the worldwide Islamic community) overrode any civic obligations to their *kaffir* (infidel) neighbors. Hence most European Muslims responded passively to van Gogh's murder. Few spoke up against the extremists in their midst. The pressure—from without *and* within—to stick by their own was, it appeared, simply too overwhelming. And the potential price for betrayal was an end not unlike that dealt out to Theo van Gogh.

That evening I flew back to Oslo. At one point, over the Atlantic, the pilot got on the loudspeaker with an update on the U.S. presidential race, telling us how many electoral votes each candidate had secured so far. Bush was ahead. But not until I was standing at the baggage carousel in Oslo—barely awake after a sleepless night over the Atlantic—did I learn how the vote had turned out. On an electronic news crawl above the carousel I read the words BUSH GJENVALGT—Bush reelected.

I had mixed feelings about the victory: while the president seemed to have a far greater understanding than his opponent of what we were fighting *against* in the war on terror, some of his domestic actions made me wonder which of the candidates had a stronger sense of what we were fighting *for*. But in New York City and the Western European capitals, I knew, there was little ambiguity. Bush's win was bad news—period.

Two days later I was in Amsterdam, where van Gogh's murder was being called the Netherlands' 9/11. Understandably, Hirsi AH had canceled all appointments; but since I'd already booked a flight and a hotel room—and was curious to see people's reactions firsthand—I went anyway.

It was easy to be lulled by the illusion that things were as they always had been. At the Amstel Taveerne, one of Amsterdam's trademark "brown cafes," there was tub-thumping music, easy laughter, even a rousing chorus of "*Lang zal je leven*" ("Long may you live") to mark a patron's birthday—in short, that feeling of communal coziness and camaraderie, known as *gezelligheid*, that the Dutch treasure above all. Yet this impression was misleading. The Netherlands, I knew, was undergoing a sea change. By the time I'd arrived in Amsterdam, there'd been several arrests; legislators had been placed under round-the-clock protection; government buildings in The Hague looked like an armed camp. Vice Premier Gerrit Zalm, who'd called Fortuyn dangerous because of his blunt rhetoric about Islam, now declared war on radical Islamism. Politically correct attitudes about immigration and integration, until a week

earlier ubiquitous in the Dutch media, were hardly to be found. "Jihad has reached the Netherlands," one commentator wrote. Another asked: "Has the Netherlands become a country in which you can no longer say what you want, or does the taboo apply only to [comments about] Islam?" (This was a nation, after all, to which philosophers and poets from all corners of Europe had fled centuries ago to be able to speak and write freely.)

I found my way to the scene of the crime. I foolishly assumed I'd have trouble locating the exact spot. In fact, an area of about seventy-five by ten feet along one side of Linnaeusstraat had been cordoned off. It was piled high with floral tributes, and about fifty people crowded around it, most of them deep in thought. I circled the site slowly, reading notes that had been left there. "This far and no further," read one. Another read: "Long live the Netherlands; long live freedom of speech!"

From there I took a long tram ride to the Muslim neighborhood called the Oud West, where a policewoman told me flat-out not to venture into such areas. "The mood in all of the Netherlands is very tense right now," she explained in a slow, deliberate, distinctively Dutch way. Earlier that day, a journalist's car had been smashed. Later, I learned that Rotterdam police had destroyed a street mural—featuring the words "Thou shalt not kill," a picture of an angel, and the date of van Gogh's murder—because the head of a nearby mosque had called it racist. Wim Nottroth, a cameraman who tried to protect the mural, had been arrested, and a camerawoman who filmed its destruction had been forced to erase part of her videotape.

I left the Oud West in a cab. Talking with the driver, I mentioned Theo van Gogh. Like many Dutchmen, he seemed reluctant to speak about such things to a foreigner. But then he said simply, "I am leaving the country. And I am not alone."

That Wednesday, police officers and marines carried out a daylong siege on an apartment in an immigrant quarter of The Hague. During the week, there were attacks on mosques and Muslim schools. I'd long been concerned that if liberals didn't address the problem of fundamentalist Muslim intolerance responsibly, it would be answered with the intolerance of the far right. In the 1930s, Europeans had faced a struggle—and, many thought, a need to choose—between two competing totalitarianisms. Was this the Continent's future as well? Was this another Weimar moment?

A great deal of water had flowed over the dike since I'd lived in Amsterdam. There'd been 9/11, then Fortuyn's murder, then Madrid. After

each atrocity, I'd expected Western Europe—part of it, anyway—to wake up and smell the coffee. In the Netherlands, to be sure, 9/11 had opened some people's eyes to the truth of Fortuyn's arguments about fundamentalism, and his murder had ushered in a frank public debate about immigration and integration. But in elite circles—in the press clubs, faculty lounges, and offices of government bureaucracies—denial and appeasement had continued to reign supreme, leading to few, if any, meaningful reforms.

That night, walking along the familiar old canals of Amsterdam and watching the warm yellow light from house windows twinkling on the surface of the water, I wondered: would the anger blow over again? Or would the Dutch, this time, act decisively to protect their democracy? Might this, in turn, initiate a wave of reform across Western Europe?

It was impossible to know. For the time being, however, most Dutchmen appeared to agree strongly with Paul Scheffer, who wrote: "We cannot hand over our country. . . . Words such as diversity, respect and dialogue fade against the dark context of this ritual assassination." Diversity, respect, dialogue: this, of course, was the mantra of political correctness, a habit of thought that in America is an annoyance but in Europe is a veritable religion—its tenets instilled by teachers and professors, preached by politicians and journalists, and put into practice by armies of government paper-pushers. It was political correctness that had gotten Europe into its current mess, and only by repudiating political correctness did Europe stand a chance of averting what seemed, increasingly, to be its fate.

I thought back to my first visit to Amsterdam. It seemed a lifetime ago—but it was only 1997.

I'D BEEN A lifelong New Yorker. If you'd asked me in, say, 1996, I'd doubtless have told you that I'd spend the rest of my days there. Then, suddenly, everything changed. A long-term relationship ended, and I found myself wanting to *go*.

At first I considered only American cities. The idea of living abroad didn't occur to me: I was American, through and through. I loved my country—which, then as now, I regarded as the world's greatest, not because of its wealth or power, but because of its culture and values. Americans' patriotism springs not from a common ethnicity but from a shared belief in individual liberty. The United States is not yet a perfect union (I've made a career largely out of lamenting its imperfections), but over

the generations it's gradually become better, fairer, more just—and it's done so by constantly struggling to be truer to its founding principles.

It was precisely this love of America that made my gaze turn toward Europe. Like many American writers, I'd lost track of the number of times I'd made sweeping generalizations about my country. "We Americans are ..." "Americans believe ..." "To be an American is to be ..." But how do you really know what it means to be an American if you've never lived anywhere else? Eventually you want to test your generalizations—to find out if you know what you're talking about.

There were other factors. Like every American who'd ever paid attention in school, I felt a sympathetic connection to Europe. Europe was Mozart and Beethoven, Matisse and Rembrandt, Dante and Cervantes. Europe was the continent from which my ancestors had migrated—Englishmen, Scotsmen, and Welshmen in search of economic opportunity in the new colonies and (later) the fledgling Republic; Anglo-Irish Quakers longing for freedom of worship; French Huguenots escaping brutal persecution by the House of Bourbon; Polish Catholic subjects of Austrian emperor Franz Josef fleeing the ravages of World War I.

I was also drawn to Europe's linguistic abundance. For me, trying to get along in a tongue other than my own was a thrilling challenge. I still had a vivid memory of my one barroom conversation in fractured German; I remembered every one of the handful of occasions on which my seven years of Spanish had actually come in handy; and I recalled even the most inane and trivial exchanges I'd had in my highly inadequate French during the week I'd spent covering the Cannes Film Festival in 1990.

So it was that now, ready for a fresh start, I found myself yearning to pick up a new language. First I bought a Berlitz teach-yourself-Danish tape; then, changing my mind, I snapped up a set of cassettes for learning Dutch. And in August of 1997 I visited Amsterdam—not yet intending to move there, but simply wanting to see the sights and try out my language skills. The trip was so exhilarating that I went back in November and again in January. I felt I was making up for lost time, throwing myself into the world after years of sitting at my desk.

Between trips, I wrote letters in Dutch to friends I'd made. On my January visit, my friend Jordy greeted me by exclaiming over my efforts. "That's real Dutch!" he said, astonished that I'd mastered the syntax. I could scarcely have been more delighted if I'd won a Pulitzer.

Why did I choose—and keep returning to—Amsterdam? Culturally, I was awed by the Netherlands: its young people came out of high school

fluent in four languages; it had gay marriage; its book-buying levels were the world's highest. The American novelist Richard Powers had lived in the Netherlands, and described it as "one of the few places on the planet where Western civilization almost works." Another writer, my friend Matthew Stadler, had taught in Groningen and exulted over his students' sophistication. He called the country "magical." It didn't take long for me to see what they meant.

Besides, I felt comfortable there. If New York could sometimes feel like a cauldron of anger and aggression, the Dutch were inherently peaceable. Back in 1990, loitering on the Croisette, Cannes' seaside promenade, I'd realized I could spot American men from afar just by their swagger: they looked ready to defend themselves at a moment's notice. Doubtless this appearance of preparedness had been useful on the frontier, but it looked ridiculous on the Riviera, where nobody carried anything deadlier than a baguette. How often had I stood in a New York subway surrounded by men, many of them far smaller than I, and been unnerved by an air of physical threat that emanated from them like the smell of sweat? Yet in Amsterdam, wedged on trams amid natives who towered over me (in the Netherlands I was, at six feet, below the average height for the first time in my life), I felt only benign energies.

Amsterdam seemed to me the leading edge of a world that had moved beyond bigotry. It was the one place I'd ever been where homophobia really seemed to have disappeared. When groups of straight teenage boys walked by the open door of a gay bar, they didn't yell "faggot"; they didn't elbow one another and point and make nervous jokes; they didn't show any discomfort or anger at all. They just walked by. It was remarkable.

European perspectives appealed to me as well. "In the United States," Simone de Beauvoir once observed, "one is always concerned to find out what an individual does, and not what he is; one takes it for granted that he is nothing but what he has done or may do; his purely inner reality is regarded with indifference, if, indeed, any note is taken of it." This is especially true in certain parts of Manhattan; it wasn't in the Netherlands. Though they were justly famous for their thrift, Dutch people's sense of identity and self-worth didn't depend on jobs or salaries. One evening a Dutchman introduced himself to me at a cafe. I told him my name, and then, at a loss for something else to say, I asked, "What do you do?" He shook his head and smiled. "We don't ask that so soon," he said. "Not like you Americans." My friend Jordy often men-

tdoned his parents, to whom he was very close; but not until my fourth visit did it emerge that his father was president of one of the Netherlands' half dozen largest corporations. Jordy hadn't been hiding this fact—it just hadn't occurred to him to mention it.

Then there was *gezelligheid*, a cherished value in the Netherlands, as it is, under different names, in much of northern Europe. Ask a Dutchman what *gezellig* means and he'll tell you proudly that it's untranslatable—it describes a concept so essentially Dutch that it can't be rendered into English. The dictionary offers these equivalents: "enjoyable," "pleasant," "companionable," "social." These aren't words your typical American would use to describe a person, place, or experience that's given enjoyment. In America—where our pop culture repeatedly tells us that you're Number One or you're nothing—praise is almost invariably expressed in hyperbolic terms: we use words like "great," "terrific," or "fantastic" very loosely. The Dutch are more appreciative of and satisfied with everyday pleasures; they aren't reaching for the unattainable; nor do they feel compelled to claim more for a person or experience than it merits.

While Americans often focus on future payoffs, preferably bountiful ones—isn't that what the American dream is all about?—the Dutch, like many other Western Europeans, attend to the present moment and its small rewards. Instead of habitually inflating language, indeed, the Dutch *un*-inflate, appending the suffix "*je*," a diminutive, to almost every imaginable noun. Thus a Dutchman invites you out not for a *bier* but for a *biertje*, not for a *praat* (a talk) but for a *praatje*. If you're his friend, he might call you not *vriend* but *vriendje*. The overall effect of all these diminutives is to give you a sense of a people taking special care not to overstate or make excessive claims. American kids learn to be proud of how big, rich, and powerful America is; I was surprised how many times I heard Dutch people say, "We are a little country."

Finally, there was Dutch secularism. I'd spent most of 1996 researching and writing a book called *Stealing Jesus*. The project had obliged me to immerse myself in American fundamentalism, and I hadn't quite gotten over it—the claustrophobic narrowness of its conception of the divine, its adherents' breathtaking combination of historical ignorance and theological certitude, and its dispiriting view of religion as a means not of engaging life's mysteries but of denying and dispelling them through a ludicrously literal-minded reading of scripture. The book had come out in late 1997, and during the ensuing months—between trips to Amsterdam—I'd spent countless hours talking with, or answering letters

from, people whose fundamentalist upbringings had been case studies in hypocrisy and psychological abuse.

One night I read from *Stealing Jesus* at Atlanta's gay bookstore, Out-right. The reading itself took up less time than the question-and-answer session, during which audience members talked affectingly about their fundamentalist childhoods. Many still couldn't let go of the religion that had scarred them, in most cases quite severely. A powerfully built middle-aged man said quietly, and in a deep, firm bass that suggested rock-solid certainty, "I know God disapproves of my being gay. I just have to hope he'll be merciful with me." And a skinny, sweet-looking boy in his twenties didn't hide the terror that had been stirred in his soul by my denigration of biblical literalism. "I know you mean well," he assured me in a gentle, quavering voice, "but if you don't believe in the Bible, you're just not a Christian." It angered me that in a nation with the world's best schools and universities, a nation responsible for history's greatest scientific and technological breakthroughs, a nation founded not on fundamentalist Christianity or "family values" but on a belief in the individual's inalienable human right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, so many people had been brought up on, and damaged for life by, life-denying, spirituality-crushing lies.

In the Netherlands, where political discourse had moved beyond "culture war" platitudes, I felt light-years removed from the foolishness of fundamentalism. There, for the first time, I allowed myself to feel the rage that had built up inside me. Yes, I loved my country, but I also realized that I wanted to be away from it—away from the idiocy, the intolerance, the puritanism. More and more, I felt I belonged in Europe.

On my first flight back to New York from Amsterdam, a KLM flight attendant passed down the aisle, handing out customs declaration cards for us to fill out—one color for Americans, another for Dutch citizens. I watched him as he made his way toward me down the length of the economy-class cabin. Pointing at each passenger in turn, he said either "U.S.?" or "Nederland?" depending on what he guessed their national identity to be. Somehow he got it right every time. Then he pointed at me.

"Nederland?" he asked.

Shortly after my second trip—by which time I'd decided to sell my apartment and move—something thoroughly unexpected happened. To make a long story short, I fell in love—and it was mutual. Together we made arrangements to move to Amsterdam.

The weekend before the big relocation, we flew to Georgia to attend

a wedding. During the reception at the tony Atlanta Women's Club on fashionable Peachtree Boulevard—in the heart, that is, of "civilized" Atlanta, "the city too busy to hate," that fabled oasis of tolerance in the midst of the Bible Belt—we stepped outside to get some air. While we stood chatting innocuously on the sidewalk in our suits and ties, a pickup truck sped by.

"Faggots!" a male voice shouted.

It was, somehow, a fitting *sayonara*.

ON SEPTEMBER 15, 1998, we left New York with two cats, a laptop, and a couple of suitcases crammed with clothes and books. Everything else I owned—mainly books—had been packed up in boxes and stored in my father's basement in Queens.

My father wasn't happy about the move. His parents had fled Europe during World War I, and the Continent was linked inextricably in his mind with war, poverty, and oppression. In his eyes, you didn't move to Europe—you fled it. Though he was a brilliant, learned man, I thought he was wrong on this one—I thought he was living in the past.

But I gradually came to feel that he had a point. Not that Amsterdam lost its appeal: I continued to love its human scale, its perfect flatness, the fact that the highest points on the skyline were centuries-old steeples. I loved the profusion of bicycles and the near absence of cars. I loved being able to get everywhere on foot or by tram or train. I loved the romance of being enveloped by the sounds of a language that was still a mystery in the process of being revealed to me. I loved the fact that every day I encountered innumerable cultural differences that made life fascinating and that I would never have learned about in any other way. I loved going out in the evening with the person I loved and walking home together along a breathtakingly beautiful canal where we could look through the uncurtained windows of elegant old brick houses into people's tidy, book-lined living rooms. (The Dutch, for centuries, have made a practice of keeping their windows uncurtained, so as to prove to their neighbors that they're not up to anything shameful.)

What more could one ask of life?

Yet as my weeks in the Old World stretched into months, my perceptions shifted. For one thing, I began to appreciate American virtues I'd always taken for granted, or even disdained—among them a lack of self-seriousness, a friendly informality with strangers, an unashamed curiosity, an openness to new experience, an innate optimism, a willingness

to think for oneself and question the accepted way of doing things. I found myself toting up words that begin with *i*: individuality, imagination, initiative, inventiveness, independence of mind. Americans, it seemed to me, were more likely to think for themselves and trust their own judgments, and less easily cowed by authorities or bossed around by "experts"; they believed in their own ability to make things better. Reagan-style "morning in America" clichés might make some of us wince, but they reflect something genuine and valuable in the American air. Europeans might or might not have more of a "sense of history" than Americans (in fact, in a recent study comparing students' historical knowledge, the results were pretty much a draw), but America, I saw, had something else that mattered—a belief in the future.

Yes, many Europeans were book lovers—but which foreign country's literature engaged them most? America's. They revered education—but to which country's universities would they most like to send their children if they had the means? Answer: the same country that performs the majority of the world's scientific research, wins most of the Nobel Prizes, and has twice as many university graduates as Europe. Yes, more Europeans were multilingual, but so what? If each of the fifty states had its own language, Americans would be multilingual too. And yes, America was responsible for plenty of mediocre popular culture; but Europeans, I was beginning to learn, consumed this stuff every bit as eagerly as Americans did—only to turn around and mock it as "typically American."

Like many other Americans, I'd identified my country with its most insipid pop-culture products and Europe with the highest of its high culture. But my perspective soon changed. Where would Europe be without American jazz, blues, rock? America's music *is* Europe's music. Ditto film and television. Every Western European alive today has grown up with American popular culture; it's shaped their sensibilities; without it, their day-to-day cultural experience would be inconceivably poorer, their lives, quite simply, less fun. The more time I spent in Amsterdam, the more I was aware of this—aware of the staggering richness of my country's cultural heritage, both "high" *and* "low," and of how much Europeans valued it, whether they were willing to admit it or not.

Other perceptions shifted too. I'd been impressed that the Dutch were less preoccupied than Americans with what people did; they cared more about one's "inner reality." Now I was beginning to see the flip side of this. Americans believe in practicing what you preach, in taking ac-

tion, in *doing something*—not just meaning well and mouthing pieties. And let's face it: what you do (or don't do) is crucial to an understanding of who you are. It's the very definition of character. Anyone can mean well; but when you're facing a terrorist enemy, what does your exquisite "inner essence" amount to if you don't actually do something?

I'd loved the Dutch devotion to *gezelligheid*—to small daily pleasures—and had looked askance at the American fixation on outsized rewards and successes. But the longer I stayed in Europe, the more I found myself viewing American ambition as a good thing. Life without it, I saw, could be a pretty pallid, hollow affair. Furthermore, I'd begun to see that in much of Western Europe, the appreciation of everyday pleasures was bound up with a stifling conformity, a discomfort with excellence, and an overt disapproval of those who strove too visibly to better their lot. Sometimes it could even seem as if Western Europe's core belief was in mediocrity.

As I sought to ease my way into Dutch society, I felt the Dutch pushing back. I learned that if America was a melting pot, the Dutch had a history of *verzuiling*, or pillarization—the division of society into religious and ethnic groups, each with its own schools, unions, political parties, newspapers, and, in recent times, TV channels. There was tolerance, yes; but it was a tolerance that regarded you not as an individual but as a member of a group; it took for granted not intermarriage and integration, but a persistent, generation-to-generation cleavage. Yes, institutional *verzuiling* was now largely a thing of the past—but the mentality lingered. However long I might stay in the Netherlands, I saw, I would always remain an outsider.

I'd loved the peaceableness of Dutch men as compared to the macho swaggering of Americans. But the flip side of that un-macho behavior was a kind of passivity that, in the aftermath of 9/11, would emerge as something less than a perfect virtue.

Finally, I'd rejoiced in the fact that Western Europeans weren't Bible-thumpers. But I was beginning to recognize that certain elements of the Continent's ever-growing immigrant population represented even more of a threat to democracy than did fundamentalist Christians in the United States. In Western Europe, not to put too fine a point on it, fundamentalist Muslims were on the march. Their numbers—and power—were large and growing rapidly. And the ultimate objective of many of their leaders was far more than a ban on abortion or gay marriage.

ONE EVENING ten weeks after our move, we were strolling along the Singel, a canal in the heart of Amsterdam, when suddenly a wiry, dark-skinned boy in his late teens stepped directly into my path. Staring up at me, he demanded money in broken English.

He was trying to come off as tough and dangerous, but his large brown eyes shone with anxiety. Looking beyond him, I saw half a dozen of his friends hovering at the edge of the canal, about twenty feet away. They were bigger than he—older, meaner. Could it be that they were putting him through some kind of test or initiation rite?

Loudly and firmly, I told the boy to hit the road. His eyes widened in astonishment. His friends glanced uncertainly at one another. After a moment's hesitation, they all beat it.

As soon as they were gone, my partner told me something I hadn't realized: the boy had pulled a knife. My partner, standing a couple of feet away from me, had seen it, but the boy had been so close to me, and had held the knife so low, that it had been outside my field of vision.

I'd lived in New York City for forty-one years, and now, after ten weeks in Amsterdam, I'd experienced my first mugging.

During our six months in Amsterdam, we lived in three flats in quick succession. The first was a large, windowless, garagelike ground-floor room in a charming neighborhood; the second, while in a dicier part of town, was elegant and high-windowed, with a postcard view of the Oude Schans canal. These apartments were, respectively, on the *centrum's* southern and eastern fringes, just inside the boundary that separates it from the city's outskirts.

The third was west of downtown and just outside that boundary, in the largely Muslim Oud West. Our address was Bellamyplein, a claustrophobia-inducing square of Dickensian ugliness. If we looked out the window at any time of day, we were likely to see one or more women pushing baby carriages, with one or more children tagging along behind them. Invariably the women wore *hijab*, the Muslim head covering. In most cases (and I didn't learn these distinctions until later) it took the form of a *chador*, a single long piece of cloth that covers the entire body and leaves only the face visible; less often, it was a *niqab* or *burqa*, which shields everything except the eyes. (Relatively few of the women wore the less severe variety of *hijab* known as *dopatta*.) * A few doors away from

*Defined by Fehrat Taj, a Pakistani student in Norway, as a "length of cloth worn over the shoulders and/or around the shoulders and/or on the head, but such that it is not tightly bound around the head."

us, a huge Turkish flag flew over the entrance to a building labeled "neighborhood center." One day we peered inside. A dozen or so Turkish-looking men, middle-aged and older, scowled back. We didn't go in.

The contrast between central Amsterdam and the Oud West was remarkable. On any given day, the downtown streets teemed with people—but unless you were near the train station or on a low-budget shopping street such as the Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal, you hardly ever saw a woman in *hijab*. Indeed, if you lived in Amsterdam and never left the city center, you could almost forget that Islam existed. Wandering along the broad canals of the Grachtengordel, all of them lined with handsome, picturesquely tilted old houses, you saw plenty of native Dutchmen—and, during the warm months, a profusion of tourists—but few men, and almost no women, who looked North African or Middle Eastern. If you got on a tram or subway, however, and took it a few stops in almost any direction, you'd confront a vastly different reality.

For one thing, Amsterdam's suburbs were as ugly as its *centrum* was beautiful. There were stretches of southwest Amsterdam—an immense, sprawling area that tourists never visit—where you could look in every direction and see nothing but an endless vista of concrete monstrosities that looked like warehouses, separated by forlorn stretches of weedy grass and linked by an elevated train line whose tracks were supported by a structure that was also a concrete monstrosity. The waves of people that flowed among these buildings were predominantly dark-skinned; many, if not most, of the women wore the *burqa*. Signs in Arabic proliferated; so did baby carriages.

I would later encounter this same contrast in other European cities. Across the Continent, Islam was a huge and growing presence. Yet Muslims were segregated to an extraordinary degree. In metropolis after metropolis, the city centers were virtually 100 percent European; the outskirts were increasingly Muslim.

Immigrant ghettos, of course, are nothing new. They've played an enormous role in America's history, and for millions of families they've been a natural stage in the transition from foreigner to hyphenate to native. It's common in ghettos to encounter immigrants who can't speak the language of their new country and who have pretty much the same attitudes, values, and way of life they had in their homeland. In most cases, integration takes place largely in the next generation: the children of immigrants go to school, grow into full-fledged members of society, and leave the ghetto behind.

But that's not the way things work in Europe nowadays. By the time I arrived in Amsterdam, its immigrant community, like those in most major European cities, had existed for decades. Inhabiting it were not only immigrants but the adult children and grandchildren of immigrants. Though born in the Netherlands, many either spoke no Dutch or spoke it very poorly. Their cultural values, to all intents and purposes, were still those of the Islamic world, and the people whom they thought of as their leaders were not the elected members of Parliament but the imams and elders who ruled their communities like tribal chieftains, enforcing traditional practices with uncompromising authority and relentlessly reminding them of the evils of the West.

Many of those leaders preached contempt for European democracy, for the European acceptance of gay relationships, for the equal role of women in European society; they rejected freedom of conscience, denounced the separation of church and state, and insisted that Muslims had no obligation to obey the rules of secular society. "These Germans, these atheists, these Europeans don't shave under their arms," preached one Berlin cleric in 2004, "and their sweat collects under their hair with a revolting smell and they stink. Hell lives for the infidels! Down with all democracies and all democrats!" That same year, a preacher told a Copenhagen audience that "secularism is a disgusting form of oppression. . . . No Muslim can accept secularism, freedom, and democracy. It is for Allah alone to legislate how society shall be regulated! Muslims wish and long for Allah's law to replace the law of man." And in February 2005, Abu Abdullah of London's Finsbury Park Mosque called non-Muslims "filthy" and urged his congregation to take part in jihad, telling them that if they could not fight in Iraq "then this is our front line here." Muslims can hear this kind of rhetoric not only at mosques but also courtesy of Arabic-language satellite TV channels such as al-Jazeera, which celebrates suicide bombers as "martyrs" and (in the words of Middle East expert Fouad Ajami) offers "an aggressive mix of anti-Americanism and anti-Zionism."

Most of my ancestors had moved to America with the intention of becoming Americans—or, at the very least, of having children and grandchildren who'd be Americans. Many Muslim immigrants arrive in Europe with very different ambitions. All want a share in Western prosperity; fewer care to adapt to Western ways. Their connections to their homelands remain very strong. Unlike my Polish grandmother, who died seventy-five years after emigrating to America without ever having left New York State, many European Muslims travel regularly back to their

homelands: at this writing there are as many direct flights every week between Oslo and Pakistan as there are between Oslo and the United States.

A Muslim in Europe, after all, is not an island unto himself. He's part of a family—which, in turn, is part of a vast clan, some of whose branches live in the family's homeland, and others, perhaps, in other European countries and/or North America. He's also part of a community whose members keep a very close eye on one another. Clan and community ties are intense, and the power of clan and community leaders is absolute. On the largest scale, moreover, the European Muslim is part of the *umma*—the worldwide brotherhood of Islam. "From my background," Hirsi Ali has told the *Guardian*, "being an individual is not something you take for granted. Here [in the Netherlands] it is all you, me, I. There it is we, we, we."

Flowing out of this roe-feeling is the obligation of clan members in Europe to send money regularly to clan members back home. Many European Muslim men even own second residences in their ancestral villages, purchased with the money they've earned (or received in government support) in Europe. Some also have additional wives and children there who live off their European income. (Muslim men may have up to four wives at a time; so far, most European governments recognize only one.) Some immigrant families, indeed, are not really immigrants at all: they maintain a European residence, which enables them to collect a variety of benefits, but spend less time there than in the countries from which they've supposedly emigrated. They're less like immigrants than like diplomats—emissaries who return home frequently and have no doubt about where their loyalties lie.

In Pakistan, there's actually a region called "Little Norway" or "Little Scandinavia" because many of the local clans have outposts, as it were, in Norway, Sweden, or Denmark. (In August 2005, Socialist Left Party leader Kristin Halvorsen even included the region on her campaign tour.) Once dirt-poor, European members of these clans now own fine homes in the area, some with servants, swimming pools, and multiple cars. When a Norwegian newspaper profiled one of these successful immigrants—who lived in Drammen, near Oslo, and had bought a lavish home in "Little Scandinavia" with money supposedly earned through decades of hard work as a taxi driver there—Oslo's Human Rights Service added a detail to his curriculum vitae: back in "Little Scandinavia," it turned out, the cabbie owned not only a house but also an entire extended family, whose members worked as slaves in his brick factory.

IMMIGRANTS TO EUROPE bring with them many tribal customs that are flagrantly inconsistent with a Western understanding of human rights. These customs represent flash points of latent or potential conflict between Muslim communities and their host societies, though for a long time the European media and political establishment did their best to downplay or ignore them.

Perhaps the most barbaric and least publicized of these customs is female genital mutilation (FGM), a practice well-nigh universal in some Islamic cultures. As Hirsi Ali has explained, Arab countries safeguard female virginity "by keeping women in the house"; in other regions, however, where "you need the labor of women outside," virginity is safeguarded by "cut[ting] off the clitoris of the woman [and sewing] together what is left." The specifics of this procedure vary—and are not pleasant to describe—but it usually involves total or partial removal of the prepuce and/or clitoris. The labia minora and majora may also be excised, and the vagina stitched up to the size of a pinhead. Traditionally, the mutilation is carried out at ages ranging from infancy to late puberty, but in Europe it's frequently performed when the child is very young, because parents know they're doing something that's frowned on and, as they say, "a baby can't tell lies." The mutilation—which rarely involves anesthesia—can cause blood poisoning and excessive bleeding, and often results in lifelong physical pain, chronic infections, and extreme discomfort during urination and sex.

Parents give many reasons for the perpetuation of this brutal custom. At the top of the list is the conviction that women's sexual feelings are sinful and their sexual organs unclean, and that mutilation therefore provides protection from sin. Such thinking comes naturally in patriarchal subcultures that teach men to view women as property, female sexual desire as nothing more than a menace to family honor, and female sexual pleasure as something therefore best obliterated as early as possible.

Then there's the practice known as "dumping"—the shipping of European Muslim children to their parents' homeland to attend Koran school. The purpose is unambiguous: to prevent their integration into Western democracy by "reeducating" them in traditional values and fundamentalist interpretations of the Koran. The bills for this "reeducation" are often paid by European mosques—which, in turn, receive funding from both European and Muslim governments. Some children are sent to these schools as early as age three. Though born in Europe,

they have little connection to mainstream European culture; in their ancestral homelands, they live with relatives who share the Koran school's goal of preventing them from *ever* developing such a connection.

In 2004, my friends Hege Storhaug and Rita Karlsen of Human Rights Service came back from a trip to Pakistan with a harrowing eyewitness account of a Koran school in Gujarat: "From the outside, it looked like a prison. It was dark and cold and there was no electricity." The children, all Scandinavian girls, didn't look well; many were undernourished. There were no desks, chairs, or educational materials in sight. The windows were barred, and were so high up that the girls couldn't look out and outsiders couldn't look in. Between the first and second stories, there was no floor but only a grating. "We looked down and saw the children below, looking up at us." At any given time, about 250 Muslim pupils are known to be "missing" from schools in Oslo alone.

To be sure, European Muslim children don't need to be sent abroad to be brainwashed in the ideals of jihad and martyrdom. In Amsterdam, moving among the native Dutch—whose public schools taught children to take for granted the full equality of men and women and to view sexual orientation as a matter of indifference—I felt safe and accepted. Yet many youngsters in the Netherlands attended private Islamic academies. These schools—which, like the mosques, received subsidies from the Dutch state as well as from Islamic governments—taught hatred of Jews, Israel, America, and the West. They taught that women should be subservient to men and that Muslims should keep their distance from infidels. They taught young people to view the democratic societies in which they lived with contempt and to regard them as transitory, destined to be replaced by a Muslim caliphate governed according to sharia law. And they reinforced the sexual morality that the young people learned at home, which allowed polygamy (for men), prescribed severe penalties for female adulterers and rape victims (but not rapists), and demanded that homosexuals be put to death.

Such schools weren't unique to the Netherlands, of course—they existed across Western Europe. Nor did Muslim children in Europe need to attend private academies in order to be inculcated with traditional values. In 2004, it emerged that an outfit called the Islamic Foundation was responsible for "giving court-mandated religious instruction to Muslim children" in German public schools. Many German teachers were less than pleased with the results: one of them complained to *New York Times* reporter Richard Bernstein that some girls, under their Muslim teacher's

influence, had dropped gym and swimming (a common problem) and some had begun wearing *hijab*. Bernstein also quoted a TV report on Muslim textbooks used in Germany, which teach that "the Muslim people's existence has been threatened by Jews and Christians since the Crusades, and it is the first duty of every Muslim to prepare to fight against these enemies."

Among the critics of this indoctrination was Marion Berning, a Berlin grade-school principal who, prohibited from sitting in on the religion classes, entered a classroom anyway and pretended to fix a window. While she was there, the teacher explained to a roomful of docile girls and rowdy boys that "women are for the house, for the children." Since these classes had begun, Berning had seen her Muslim and non-Muslim pupils grow apart from one another; fighting and name-calling had increased, and more and more Muslim girls were withdrawing from school trips and athletics. The story was the same across Europe. In Milan, for example, school officials were caving in to Muslim parents' demands that their children be put in Muslim-only classes to insulate them from a "secular atmosphere"—that is, from the democratic West in which they lived.

For a long time, many European officials saw intermarriage as the key to integration. They assumed that when the children of immigrants grew up, they'd marry ethnic Europeans and raise European children. Ghettos would fade away; segregation would be a thing of the past. But that didn't happen. Levels of intermarriage and integration have remained exceedingly low—and ghettos are expanding. Why? The answer, in two words: family reunification. Under the immigration laws of most Western European countries, if you're a citizen or permanent resident, your foreign spouse, children, and (in some cases) other family members may enter the country and live with you. Many immigrant communities, through a pragmatic twist on the tradition of arranged marriage, have exploited this provision brilliantly—and in doing so have changed the face of both Western Europe and Muslim marriage.

Imagine, if you will, a girl whose parents moved from Morocco to Belgium before she was born. She's a Belgian citizen and, as such, theoretically entitled to all the rights of any Belgian citizen. But when she reaches her mid-teens or thereabouts, her father will arrange for her to marry someone in Morocco—or (much less likely) someone in the Moroccan community in Belgium or perhaps in the Netherlands or France. The prospective husband will almost certainly be a member of her extended family—probably a first or second cousin. She may or may not

have met him before. She may or may not like him. She probably won't want to marry him. But she'll almost certainly obey. Because she knows what may happen if she does not. (Boys are forced into marriages too, though generally speaking they undergo less of a risk if they refuse.)

Storhaug and Karlsen have called forced marriage "a modern-day commerce in human beings." They've also pointed out a fact most European politicians would prefer to ignore—that a forced marriage will likely involve forced sex, sometimes on a daily basis. Human Rights Service studied ninety cases of forced marriage in Norway and found that only three of the wives were not raped—either because they'd run away in time or because the marriage was pro forma. Girls forced into "marriages" who try to fight off their "husbands" on their "wedding nights" can't expect parents or in-laws to come to the rescue. One girl said that when she screamed out for help, her new in-laws, still celebrating the wedding in an adjoining room, "just turned up the volume on the music." Another girl said, "I'll never forget the day after the wedding night. Everyone must have seen the pain in my face. But even my own mother gave no sign that I could ask for the least amount of support and comfort from her."

Traditionally, in Muslim countries, a new wife moves in with her husband's family—never the opposite. Among European Muslims this custom has been entirely overthrown. Nowadays, when a transnational marriage between Muslim cousins takes place, the spouse that migrates is invariably the non-European spouse, whose first residence after migrating is, as a rule, his or her in-laws' home. These marriages—which in Norway have acquired the name "fetching marriages"—accomplish two things. They enable more and more members of an extended Muslim family to emigrate to Europe and enjoy Western prosperity. And they put the brakes on—or even reverse—whatever progress the European-born spouse might have made toward becoming Westernized. In other words, the disease of integration is prevented by injecting into the European branch of the family a powerful booster shot of "traditional values"—that is, a hostility to pluralism, tolerance, democracy, and sexual equality. These inoculations have proven extraordinarily effective.

For fathers, this anti-integration effort is of particular urgency where their daughters are concerned. In most European Muslim families, the female sex role is severely circumscribed: women and girls alike understand that they're subject to the authority of men and that they must abide by extremely narrow rules of conduct. A female who oversteps her proper role or defies male authority is viewed as having stained

her family's honor, and may end up paying the ultimate price. The best way to avoid this eventuality is to ensure that one's distaff offspring not become infected by the West.

Some parents will go to extraordinary lengths to prevent such infection, combining "dumping" and forced marriage in a triumph of complete non-integration. The parents of one Norwegian-born girl sent her back to their homeland at age three to attend Koran school. While they collected child benefits in Norway, she stayed at the school. Graduated at sixteen, she was married off at once. Just before having her first child, she returned to Norway—not knowing a word of Norwegian, and not having been educated in anything but the Koran—and brought her husband over through family reunification. Some months after giving birth, she contacted her Koran school to reserve a place for her child, who, like her, would be enrolled at age three. Far from being unique, this young woman exemplifies the ideal toward which many immigrant families strive in their effort to exploit European munificence while avoiding pollution by European culture.

To be sure, most Muslim children in Europe attend regular public schools, where even the most sheltered girl will be influenced to some degree by Western culture—inevitably picking up ideas about her right to date, have a career, select her own husband, and make her own decisions. This is why importing spouses is so crucial. By compelling his daughter to wed an illiterate villager for whom the very idea of female independence is anathema, who believes it's a husband's God-given right and duty to beat such ideas out of her (or, for that matter, to beat her for any reason whatsoever), and who will restrict her movements outside the home as fully as possible, a father can fight off the influence of the West and ensure that his daughter, though living in Europe, will have a life very much like that of a peasant woman in a Pakistani village.

The typical Muslim girl in Western Europe thus lives with the probability that she'll someday be compelled to marry an imported husband whom she'll be expected to obey without fail. If she refuses to have sex with him, her parents and in-laws will consider it only reasonable for him to force himself on her; if she tries to fight him off, it'll be perfectly within his rights to handle her as brutally as necessary. And if she disobeys him publicly—thereby damaging the family's honor—the whole family may consider it his sacred obligation to dispatch her in an "honor killing."

In January 2002, a young Swedish woman named Fadime Sahindal, who'd become a media star after refusing to submit to a forced marriage—

and whose ethnically Swedish boyfriend later died under mysterious circumstances—was murdered by her father. On his arrest, he readily confessed and called his dead daughter a whore. The story made headlines across Scandinavia. But this and other high-profile cases are only the tip of the iceberg; most honor killings in Europe, it's believed, never even come to the attention of the authorities. In 2004, Britain's public prosecutor began reinvestigating no fewer than 117 suspicious deaths or disappearances to determine if honor killings had taken place. Over a six-month period in 2004-2005, eleven women were victims of honor killings in The Hague alone.

Here's a sampling of representative British cases. In south London in 2002, a young woman who'd been raped was murdered by her family to restore its honor. The next year, in Birmingham, twenty-one-year-old Sahjda Bibi was stabbed twenty-two times in her wedding dress by a cousin for marrying a divorced man and not a relative. In the same year, a Yorkshire teenager was murdered by her father in Pakistan over a relationship the family hadn't known about until her boyfriend dedicated a love song to her on Pakistani-language radio. In London in 2003, a lively sixteen-year-old London girl named Heshu Yones—who'd fallen in love with a Lebanese Christian boy and planned to run away with him—was stabbed eleven times by her father, who then slit her throat. In a farewell note to her father, Heshu referred to the frequent beatings he'd given her:

Bye Dad, sorry I was so much trouble.

Me and you will probably never understand each other, but I'm sorry I wasn't what you wanted, but there's some things you can't change.

Hey, for an older man you have a good strong punch and kick.

I hope you enjoyed testing your strength on me, it was fun being on the receiving end.

Well done.

At the trial, the prosecutor noted that Heshu's father "didn't approve of her more Westernized lifestyle—wanting to be with friends and having a mobile phone." Though the Muslim Council of Britain issued a statement saying that it didn't condone Heshu's murder, Council spokesman Inayat Bunglawala added that "many Muslims would understand Yones being upset by his daughter's apparent rejection of her faith" and by her "growing up not with his value system but someone else's." As journalist Val MacQueen noted in reporting this story, this was "the value system

of a country that the father, a Kurdish refugee, had begged on his knees to get into." It was revolting, moreover, to see Bunglawala referring sympathetically to the "value system" of a man who'd just hacked his child to death.

What makes these murders different from others that take place every day in the West is that many members of the perpetrators' subculture consider them defensible. According to the *Sun*, Yorkshire police investigating the song-dedication murder "met a wall of silence in the girl's Pakistani community." After the murder of Fadime Sahindal, Norwegian Muslims asked by reporters for their comments declined to condemn it outright. More than one insisted that the father had done what he had to do. "I can't say it was right and I can't say it was wrong," volunteered one Oslo merchant. Did this unwillingness to criticize an unspeakable crime betoken approval of the father's actions or fear of challenging community norms? Either way, it was chilling.

It's impossible to bridge the gap between a Western mind-set and one that makes "honor killing" possible. Imagine that your daughter is raped—and that in response you feel obliged to kill her. Such scenarios are played out in Europe with increasing regularity. Honor killing, to be sure, is not an exclusively Muslim phenomenon—the first one uncovered in Sweden was by a Palestinian Christian who murdered his daughter in 1994 for spurning an arranged marriage—but most such crimes in Europe are, indeed, committed by Muslims and many Muslims do, indeed, have trouble condemning them.

Sometimes girls are taken abroad to be murdered. Such was the case with Pela Atroshi, who, in 1995, at age fifteen, emigrated from Iraq to Sweden with her parents and six siblings. Pela soon looked like an integration success story—she learned Swedish, was a good student, and made non-Muslim friends. This infuriated her father, who accused her of "living a European life." One night when she was nineteen, she made the mistake of staying out all night. Her parents were livid; several men in the family insisted she be murdered. Pela fled to safety, but after being told she was forgiven she returned home and contritely agreed to submit to an arranged marriage. When she traveled with her father to Iraq for the ceremony, however, it turned out that her family had arranged not a marriage but a murder. An Iraqi court sentenced Pela's father and uncle to five months' probation for the crime. The reason for the lenient sentence was that their "motive was honorable."

Often women are gang-raped as punishment for something the men

in their family have done—and are then murdered by the men in their family to dispel the shame of the rape. And sometimes European Muslim girls are murdered for "offenses" they've committed during their sojourns abroad. In 2000, a twelve-year-old with a Swedish passport was out shopping with her mother and brother in her family's hometown in northern Iraq. There she met a neighbor boy, who gave her a ride in his car. This breach of honor—riding unchaperoned with a boy to whom she was not related—"made the whole family angry," recalled a relative. About sixty family members held a conference at which they discussed murdering the girl. Eventually they decided not to do so. But not everyone agreed. One day in May 2001 the girl, now thirteen, walked out of her family home to find three of her uncles and four of her cousins waiting. They pumped eighty-six bullets into the girl's body. (Like her, two of the uncles were Swedish citizens.)

Horrible though all this is, it's nothing compared to the sharia-run Europe of fundamentalist imams' dreams. What would sharia law mean to Europe? A partial answer: converts from Islam to other religions would be executed; thieves would have their arms amputated; women would be required on pain of beating (or worse) to conform to a severe dress code; adulterous women would be stoned to death; so would gay people.

It's certainly no secret what most European Muslims think of homosexuality. "After more than twenty-five years in the immigration field," writes Kirsten Damgaard, a Danish cultural psychologist, "the Muslim immigrants I have personally met who find homosexuality acceptable can be counted on one hand." In 1999, a speaker at a student conference on "Islamophobia" at King's College, London, began by announcing politely, "I am a gay Muslim." That effectively ended his presentation. His audience, mostly Muslims, responded by shouting furiously, rushing the stage, and confronting him aggressively. "Security was called," reported the *Guardian*, "and the conference came to a premature end." Then, in October 1999, the Shari'ah Court of the UK declared a fatwa against Terence McNally, who in his play *Corpus Christi* had depicted Jesus Christ as gay. (In Islam, Jesus is counted among the prophets.) Signing the death order, judge Sheikh Omar Bakri Muhammed charged that the Church of England, by failing to take action against McNally, had "neglected the honour of the Virgin Mary and Jesus." According to the sheikh, McNally could escape punishment only by converting to Islam. "If he simply repents," the *Daily Telegraph* helpfully explained, "he

would still be executed, but his family would be cared for by the Islamic state carrying out the sentence and he could be buried in a Muslim graveyard."

A few weeks later, British Muslim leaders were busy battling the repeal of Section 28, Great Britain's notorious antigay law. Dr. Hasham El-Essawy, director of the Islamic Society for the Promotion of Religious Tolerance in the UK and (according to the *Telegraph*) an "Islamic moderate," found it appropriate to quote the Koran's punishment for lesbians—"Keep the guilty women in their homes until they die, or till God provides a way out for them"—and for homosexual men: "If two of your men commit the abominable act, bother them. But, if they repent. . . then bother them no more." El-Essawy made clear his "moderation" by contrasting his view with that of some other Muslims, who, he explained, "believe that the punishment for homosexuality is death."

Kheir Sajer, an Oslo Muslim who describes Islamism as a "cancer" in his community, tells of an Oslo imam who has preached that Christians, under sharia law, must *pay jizya*, the protection tax demanded of all infidels living in Muslim lands: "In Norway, they don't do this. Therefore the Muslims have a right to steal from them. If a Muslim walks straight into a store and steals, it is thus a legitimate act." Other Oslo imams, says Sajer, agree.

After Sajer wrote about these matters, local Islamists mobilized a propaganda campaign against him, threatening his friends, claiming he'd "mocked Allah and the Prophet Muhammed," and labeling him a drug user and homosexual ("a serious accusation in the Muslim community"). Since "most refugees and immigrants listen to the congregation's imams and believe what they say," friends and neighbors turned against him. He was persecuted for months: "They use a method we know very well. When one of them sees me walking in the street, he calls an ally and tells him what direction I'm going. After five minutes I notice someone walking behind me." When he heard that fiery discussions about him were taking place at a certain Oslo mosque, he went there, and heard someone say angrily: "Here comes the infidel, who smears Islam and Muslims. Here is the Norwegians' agent who writes for a handful of kroner!" Sajer, who recognized the man as a doctor at a major Oslo hospital, noted wryly that this outcry against "Norwegians" took place in a mosque financed by Norwegian tax money.

When he contemplated going to the police, a fellow Muslim advised him to back off. "You know that some of them have a position in Norway and can wreck things for you with your residency permit. You'll be sent

back without even knowing why." It was then that the truth sank in: "Those who have the power aren't the police, but these Islamists. And the law that applies in Norway isn't Norwegian law, but sharia. . . . The security Norway has given me is in danger. For these fanatics want to hijack my freedom and my soul. They want to play leaders for the Muslims. They want to exercise power against us. They want to gag us." Why, he asks, should this be so? "Why do these Islamists have so much power over us? Why are they supported by the state, without supervision, without control, and without other Muslims being able to voice their opinions about them? There's a big difference between a Muslim and an Islamist, just as big as the difference between a German and a Nazi."