

A suggestion that Europe is the Muslim Domain: a study from historical and contemporary perspectives

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DOI: 10.18326/ijims.v9i1.83-109

Abstract

In the past century saw that Europe associates themselves as a Christian domain until now. The proclamation of Edict of Thessalonica in 380 AD made Nicene Christianity as the state in The Roman Empire and saw a transition from paganism to a Christian domain of Christendom. Since its inception, several edicts have been enacted and several peace treaties have been broken to diminish an idea of multiculturalism within their faith land. The establishment of Muslim rules in the Iberian Peninsula has changed the dominion of Christian. Muslims in Spain introduced *convivencia*, which saw that Abrahamic religions, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity co-exist together, removing racial, cultural, and religious barriers to embrace each other that nurture spirit of inclusion. The Golden Age of Muslim Civilization gives a piece of evidence that Cordova has become

a center of Europe, perhaps the world for scientific knowledge advancement. Subsequently, it contributes to the Renaissance Age in Europe. Additionally, the fall of Constantinople in 1453 under Ottomans reshaping the geography of Europe and permanently marked the term of European Islam. Through tedious analysis of media, reports, and past journals, this article adopted critical analysis in understanding the complexity of the history of Europe, at the same time positioning Islam as part of European culture. The contribution of Islam in Europe seems negligible and less attention has been given. Past researchers tend to overlook and belittle impacts of Islam in the European continent, thus diminish any legitimacy of Islam in Europe. Critical analysis methodology assists the researcher to understand the main issues, review past and present evidence from reliable sources to establish concrete arguments in providing critical evaluation on the issues. It is also a form of the method involving the investigated topics more deeply, by going beneath the surface of reality to explore the truth of a particular issue. The article established its arguments through a historical analysis in Europe starting from ancient time to present situation to give a clear analogy and legitimacy on the presence of Islam in Europe. The finding shows that Islam indeed a part of Europe since the establishment of Umayyad Caliphate and the presence of Islam in Sicily. Moreover, contemporarily, the rising of Muslims, issues of atheism, and secularism prove that Europe is no longer the center of Christianity but already becomes a multicultural society.

Pada abad lalu, Eropa mengasosiasikan diri mereka sebagai sebuah domain Kristen sampai sekarang. Maklumat Edict of Thessalonica pada 380 AD menjadikan Kekristenan Nicene sebagai negara di dalam Imperium Romawi dan melihat peralihan dari paganisme kepada suatu domain Kristen atau Kekristenan. Sejak didirikan, beberapa dekrit telah diberlakukan dan beberapa perjanjian damai telah dipatahkan untuk mengurangi gagasan multikulturalisme di dalam tanah kepercayaan mereka. Pendirian aturan Muslim di Semenanjung Iberia telah mengubah kekuasaan Kristen. Muslim di Spanyol memperkenalkan *convivencia*, yang melihat bahwa agama Abrahamik, Islam, Yudaisme dan Kristen hidup berdampingan bersama-sama, menghilangkan hambatan rasial, budaya dan agama untuk merangkul satu sama lain yang memupuk semangat inklusi. Zaman keemasan peradaban Muslim membuktikan bahwa Cordova telah menjadi pusat Eropa dan mungkin dunia untuk kemajuan pengetahuan ilmiah.

Selanjutnya, berkontribusi untuk Renaissance Age di Eropa. Selain itu, jatuhnya Konstantinopel pada tahun 1453 di bawah Ottomans membentuk kembali geografi Eropa dan secara permanen menandai istilah Islam Eropa. Melalui analisa yang membosankan tentang media, laporan dan jurnal masa lalu, artikel ini mengadopsi analisa kritis dalam memahami kompleksitas sejarah Eropa, pada saat yang sama memposisikan Islam sebagai bagian dari budaya Eropa. Kontribusi Islam di Eropa tampaknya diabaikan dan kurang mendapatkan perhatian. Peneliti masa lalu cenderung mengabaikan dan meremehkan dampak Islam di benua Eropa, sehingga mengurangi legitimasi Islam di Eropa. Metodologi analisis kritis membantu peneliti untuk memahami isu utama, meninjau bukti-bukti masa lalu dan sekarang dari sumber terpercaya untuk membangun argumen konkret dalam memberikan evaluasi kritis pada masalah yang dibahas. Ini juga merupakan bentuk metode yang melibatkan penyelidikan topik lebih dalam, dengan menjangkau bagian bawah dari permukaan realitas untuk mengeksplorasi kebenaran dari masalah tertentu. Artikel itu menetapkan argumen melalui analisis sejarah di Eropa mulai dari zaman kuno untuk menyajikan situasi dan memberikan analogi yang jelas dan legitimasi di hadapan Islam di Eropa. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa Islam memang bagian dari Eropa sejak berdirinya kekhalifahan Umayyah dan kehadiran Islam di Sisilia. Selain itu, bersamaan dengan meningkatnya umat Islam, isu ateisme dan sekularisme merupakan bukti bahwa Eropa tidak lagi menjadi pusat Kekristenan tetapi sudah menjadi masyarakat multikultural.

Keywords: *European History; European Islam; Multiculturalism; Muslim Civilization*

Introduction

Since ancient times, Europe has been associated with a Christian domain, infamously known as Christendom.¹ Christian beliefs and doctrine have largely determined the evolution of the European countries, especially relations of church and state remained powerful dynamic within European political long history after the emergence of the secular government.² The

¹Novalis, "Christendom or Europe" [Die Christenheit oder Europa], 1826.

²Mary Anne Perkins, *Christendom and European Identity : The Legacy of a Grand Narrative*

association of Europe with Christianity can be traced on the evidence from several occasions such as between 1492 and 1914, Europeans conquered 84% of the globe, establishing colonies and spreading their influence across every inhabited continent.³ Among the main objectives of their colonialism agenda is to spread Christianity, to look for gold and rivalry to against Islam, through the slogan of Gold, Gospel, and Glory. This can be seen in the conquest of Malacca (Malacca is one of the flourished state and Islamic centers located in South East Asia) by Portuguese in the 15th century.⁴ Other evidence is from the conquest of Inca civilization by Spaniards and forced conversion on the Catholic religion, which brings to the destruction of Inca civilization.⁵ The arguments on the Christianity as the identity of Europe is not arguably wrong, as the Pope, religious leader of Catholic Christian resided in Europe, the existence of “Holy Roman Emperor” title which started from 800 A.D⁶ and the clashing power between church and state have dominated the influence in the European region which strengthened the concept of Christendom.

The rising of movement emphasizing Christian identity as an opposition to the perceived rise of Islam, raise an ontology is Europe still thinking of itself as Christian identity, albeit there has been a gradual movement towards secularization and de-Christianisation. Since 1968, Europe has been going through major anthropological shifts that have fundamentally separated society’s values from Christian values. Making Islam as the central issue, to solidify their stand on Christianity is a bogus one. The

since 1789. Walter de Gruyter, 2004.

³Philip T. Hoffman, “How Europe Conquered the World,” *Foreign Affairs Magazine*, published by the Council on Foreign Relations, October 7, 2015, accessed February 2, 2019. (<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2015-10-07/how-europe-conquered-world>)

⁴Paulo Jorge de Sousa Pinto, Share, and Strife - The Strait of Melaka and the Portuguese (16th and 17th centuries). *Orientierungen Themenheft* (2013), 64-85.

⁵Kaitlynn Harless, “Force and Deceit: The Creation of an Andean-Catholic Religion,” Bachelor Honour Thesis, University of Colorado, 2018.

⁶Viscount James Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911.

legality of same-sex marriage, the practice of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender), abortion lawful, and increasingly demanding of human rights enforcement are all coming from inside Europe itself, voted by people and ratified by their law.

The polemic on the identity of Europe as a Christian club still exists until now after the reduction of power in terms of roles and political power by church and the rising of Muslims in Europe. The rising of secularism or paganism among Europeans, separation of religion from individual life does not disappear the “feeling of Christianity”, albeit they do not practice Christian nor believe in God.⁷ The issue can be seen in the reluctance of some European Union countries on the application of Turkey. Some of them raise an issue if a Muslim country can be considered as part of Europe.⁸ The reluctant approach by some EU countries has triggered a research question, is Europe exclusively only for Christian or Judeo-Christian? Does Europe’s identity solely belong to those two semantic religions? How about Islam and its position in Europe? This paper is going to investigate suggestions on the basis that Europe also has roots of Muslims, despite the dominant influence of Christianity in historical perspective and contemporary view.

Europe and the Christianization process

Europe is divided into Eastern and Western Europe, which goes back to the time of the Holy Roman Empire (Western) and the Byzantine Empire (Eastern). The members of Eastern countries are Belarus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, among others on its north side

⁷Dale Hurd, “Pagan Europe? Most Europeans Say They Are Christiano Title.” *The Christian Broadcasting Network*, March 3, 2018, accessed February 2, 2019. (<https://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2018/may/pagan-europe-most-europeans-say-they-are-christian>)

⁸Stephen Kinzer, “Turkey, Rejected, Will Freeze Ties to European Union”, *The New York Times*, December 15, 1997, accessed on February 3, 2019. (<https://www.nytimes.com/1997/12/15/world/turkey-rejected-will-freeze-ties-to-european-union.html>)

and the Balkans-such as Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Serbia, Romania, Hungary as well as Turkey to its south. The members of Western countries include Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Austria, England, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. However, Russia is considered a member of the Eurasian continent. The venture of Christianity in Europe can be categorized as a bloody event in history.⁹ The origin of Christian in the Roman Empire is unknown, while some scholars admitted Christianity found its way into Rome through the Jewish community which existed there in the first century.¹⁰ It became widespread in the Roman Empire, but its followers were constantly violated and persecuted by the Empire on their refusal to offer sacrifices to Roman gods and to worship pagan gods. They also became scapegoats for various reasons such as plagues, economic problems to hostile invasion by barbarians. Christian became an illegal religion during that period and the first persecution was carried in an action under the Emperor of Nero in 64 AD after the Great Fire of Rome. Furthermore, in 303, Christian's followers were undergone severe persecution, called Diocletianic or Great Persecution. During that period, several emperors such as Diocletian, Maximian, Galerius, and Constantius issued a series of edicts to abolish Christian's legal rights and forced them to compel with traditional religious practice and, paganism.¹¹ It is estimated that during Constantius's period, Christians only made up 10% of the Roman population.¹² Although evidence statistic is inadequate, one of the historians of the persecution estimates overall numbers between

⁹Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church, Modern Christianity. The German Reformation*, Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 2nd ed., Vol. VII, 1882.

¹⁰James Henry Hingston, "The Origin of Christianity in Rome", *The Irish Church Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 31 (1915), 200-214.

¹¹Michael Gaddis, *There Is No Crime for Those Who Have Christ : Religious Violence in the Christian Roman Empire*, 1st ed. University of California Press, 2005.

¹²Tyler Yung Laughlin, "The Controversy of Constantine's Conversion to Christianity", *Senior Seminar*, Western Oregon University, 2007.

5500 and 6500 people have perished.¹³

It is estimated that about 300 years Christian's followers have perished under the persecution before Christian was legalized through political agreement in Milan between Roman Emperor (Western) Constantine the Great and Roman Emperor (Eastern) Licinus in February 313.¹⁴ The proclamation of Edict of Milan is regarded as the main ingredient for the solidification of Christianity within the Roman Empire; the latter transition of the Roman Empire to Christian with Constantine became the First Christian's Emperor and patron to the church. The proclamation assured freedom of religions within the empire and at the same time reclaimed Christian's legal rights. The ascension of Christianity marked the downfall of paganism, followed by the retribution of church towards paganism such as pillaging pagan temples, forbidding pagan sacrifice and also pagan's followers were attacked by ordinary Christian's followers.

The first anti-pagan law was enacted by the Constantius II from 337-361 by the prescribed death penalty for those performed or attended pagan sacrifices, worshipping idols, closing of temples and removal of Altar of Victory ¹⁵. Despite that, anti-pagan policies were quietly resisted by governors and officers due to big numbers of remaining pagan's followers in Roman's entire population. Subsequently, during Theodosius's era, who became emperor for both empire (the Western and the Eastern) after defeating Eugenius and Arbogastes in the battle of Frigidus, an essence battle for the survival of paganism¹⁶ saw a zero-toleration towards paganism

¹³Yuval Noah Hariri, "*Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*", Harvil Secker, 2015.

¹⁴Milton Vasil Anastos, "The Edict of Milan (313) : A Defence of Its Traditional Authorship and Designation", *Revue Des Études Byzantines*, Vol.25, No. 1 (1967), 13-41.

¹⁵James Sheridan, "The Altar of Victory - Paganism's Last Battle", *Lantiquité Classique*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (1966), 186-206.

¹⁶Thomas Samuel Burns, *Barbarians within the Gates of Rome : A Study of Roman Military Policy and the Barbarians, ca. 375-425 A.D.* Birmington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994.

by executing Magistrates who did not enforce anti-pagan law. He also issued Theodosian decrees, a controversial edict which contradicts to Edict of Milan, which practically banned the practice of Paganism within the empire.¹⁷ The proclamation of Edict of Thessalonica in 380 AD made the Nicene Christianity as the state religion,¹⁸ also, signified the beginning of the Christendom. The anti-paganism continued to be carried out after the death of Theodosius, and Christianization of the Roman Empire became completed when Anastasius I Dicorus ascended to the emperor and was forced to sign written form of declaration of orthodoxy.¹⁹ The completion of Christianization in the Roman Empire developed Christendom in European continents. Any conflicts between the European civilization and other civilizations always became the basis of the religious conflicts, especially with Islam. The integration of Christianity did not only occur within individual life but also occurred in the political and international arena in which the Roman Empire was seen as the protector of the Christian' realm and also as the centre for Christianity's foothold.

Europe and early Islamic presence

After 200 years on the completion of Christianization in the Roman Empire, Islam came to Europe through several occasions during Umar and Umayyad periods. In 652 AD, after establishing the first navy, Arab launched a small invasion against Byzantine Sicily but did not succeed until a full conquest began on 827-902.²⁰ Islam gained the first stronghold through Umayyad conquest on Hispania (Spain and Portugal), renamed

¹⁷Clyde Pharr, "Review: The Theodosian Code", *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (1953), 392-394.

¹⁸Eugenia Russell, *Literature and Culture in Late Byzantine Thessalonica*, London: Bloomsbury, 2013.

¹⁹Georgije Ostrogorski, *History of the Byzantine State*. Revised. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1969.

²⁰Leonard C. Chiarelli, *A History of Muslim Sicily*. Midsea Books, 2011.

as Al-Andalus in 711. As opposed to the Christianization process within the Roman Empire, the conquest of Muslims is welcomed by the Spanish Jewish Community as a liberator from the oppression of the Catholics.²¹ In stark contrast, the presence of Islam within Europe was always seen as a threat to the existence of Christianity and seen as the militarily seized territory from native Iberian Christians, which in later years, the Christians' kingdoms were called for Reconquista to against the Muslim's presence. The Islamic civilization in Spain encompasses many fields that left a profound imprint in the Iberian Peninsula and Europe. During that period, literature and art were flourished; many buildings were constructed based on Islamic arts. At the same time, Cordoba became the civilization capital for both Spain and the west in general. As the capital of civilization, Cordoba was known for its scientific advance, which played a vital role in the revolution of science. This was not limited to Cordoba alone but was spread to other cities under Islamic rule, for instance, Granada, Toledo, etc. According to historical sources, Pope Sylvester II (another name for Gerbert) has been enrolled at some universities in Andalusia and introduced the science of mathematics and Arabic numerals in Italy.²²

Furthermore, the contribution of Islam towards European Civilization can be seen when Muslim scholar's manuscripts such as the works from Ibn Sina, Al Farabi, Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Bajjah, and Ibn Rushd were quickly spread all over Europe and became mandatory literature in the European universities. This period was often called as a "Golden Age" for Islamic civilization, while the progress of scientific knowledge in Europe languished in Dark Age. The Arabic language became the main tool for the spread of knowledge, generally in scientific fields. Largely, this contribution can become a piece of evidence during Medieval Age such as history writing

²¹David Nicolle, *The Great Islamic Conquests AD 632-750*, Oxford: Osprey, 2009.

²²Safvet Halilović, "Islamic Civilization in Spain - A Magnificent Example of Interaction and Unity of Religion and Science", *Psychiatria Danubina*, Vol. 29, Suppl. 1, (2017): 64-72.

by Muslim historians which were characterized by accuracy, scientific assembling of facts and their objective approach²³ and advancement of Islamic medicine by Al-Razi who wrote about *Kitab Al-Hawi Fi Al-Thib* (The Comprehensive Book on Medicine), a 23 volume of a textbook that became the main medical curriculum for European schools in 14th century, Ibn Sina, who wrote *Al-Qanun Fi Al-Thibb* (The Canon Medicine) and Mansur, who firstly wrote color illustrated book on Anatomy.²⁴ These books and ideas provided were the main references for medical care in Europe during its recovery from the Dark Age. In the mathematical field, Al-Khwarizmi developed modern Al-Gebra, while Abual Rihan Al Beruni, who defined the ratio between densities of gold, mercury, lead, silver, bronze, copper, brass, iron and tin developed physics.²⁵ Subsequently, thanks to the Muslim scientific advancement which contributed towards the Renaissance era.²⁶ The significance of Muslims' presence in Europe was undeniably important as Muslims play a vital role in shaping what today Europe is. By promoting multi-racial integration or *convivencia* among Muslims, Christian, and Jews, the three monotheistic religions sit together with peace and harmony under Muslim rule. This mutual co-existence period was created by social cooperation, religious tolerance and cultural impact. This is indeed an important landmark that shows Islamic presence is not solely to conquest but also to reshape the society through knowledge advancement and sharing. The reason for this argument is, it is impossible to create "knowledge creation" if the society in disorder and

²³Samee Ullah Bhat, "Muslim Contribution To History Writing During The Medieval Times: (An Overview)", *Asian Journal Of Multidisciplinary Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (2016): 126-30.

²⁴Hawa Edriss, Brittany N. Rosales, Connie Nugent, Christian Conrad, and Kenneth Nugent. "Islamic Medicine in the Middle Ages", *The American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, Vol. 354, No. 3 (2017), 223-29.

²⁵Muhammad Adil Afridi, "Contribution of Muslim Scientists to the World: An Overview of Some Selected Fields", *Revelation and Science*, Vol. 03, No. 1 (2013), 47-56.

²⁶George Sarton, *Introduction to the History of Science*, New York: Carnegie Institution of Washington, Baltimore, 1927.

distress situation. The allocation of resources and the social development will become stagnant, but, Andalus does not only become the centre of Islamic civilization but also become the centre of knowledge in Europe.

Declination of Andalusia in Europe and rising of the Ottoman empire

Muslim power in Hispania prevailed almost 800 years (711-1492) before it is continued to wane until the last Muslim dynasty was defeated in Granada in 1492 by Catholic royal powerhouse Queen Isabel of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragon conquered Granada, which brings end Muslim rule in Spain to the end. The conquest of Spain brings to the expulsion of Muslims and Jews, despite the promise made by the Boabdil (late sultan) on the surrender of Granada, Treaty of Granada 1491, which allowed Muslims and Jews to practise their faith. The treaty was violated, mosques were being converted to Cathedral, Archbishop Cisneros ordered the mass conversions of Muslims and Jews into Christian. To add more, he also ordered to burn ten thousands of Arabic manuscripts on valuable knowledge. By 1502, the monarchs had made Islamic practice as illegal in Spain.²⁷ Thus, it can be concluded that the spirit of Christianity is always the main agenda for the European medieval countries as the main slogan to drive out any of their enemy whether it is enemy of invasion or enemy during colonialism. The European at that time proudly saw themselves as an “enlightenment people” and any religion that is outside of Christianity is considered as heretical. In addition, the close relationship between the royal house and church solidified the creation of Christian’s sphere in Europe. The support given by church was regarded as the backbone power for royal house to stay in power. It is also one of the main elements to call

²⁷Sabera Ahsan, “This Is What Happened to Muslims and Jews after the Fall of Islamic Spain in 1492”, *Muslim.com*, April 17, 2017, accessed on February 7, 2019 (<https://muslim.com/this-is-what-happened-to-muslims-and-jews-after-the-fall-of-islamic-spain-in-1492/>)

people rally on their side in needed time.

The fall of Granada is not the end of Muslim presence in Europe as its predecessor, the Ottoman Empire continued Muslim expansion in Europe, which later shaped the history of the South Eastern Europe. The foundation of the Ottoman Empire was started in 1281 by Ottoman I and his victory over Byzantine at Bapheon. His legacy was succeeded by Orhan Bey through his conquest on Bursa which marked the beginning of Ottoman expansion into the Balkan, South Eastern Europe.²⁸ Allied himself with Byzantine Emperor through political marriage with Theodora, the daughter of John VI Cantacuzenus gave him an access of knowledge on Balkan's area which he managed to conquered Gallipoli as a permanent foothold in Europe. The conquest of South Eastern Europe was continued by the Ottoman rulers and actually became one of their foreign policy expansion towards Europe. This can be seen that Murad I conquest Thrace, Edirne, Macedonia and parts of Greece and Albania. Bayezid I annexed Bulgaria, Mehmet I conquest of Dobruja, Giurgiu and Turnu.²⁹ In due course of Ottoman's peak power in term of militarily and politically, they finally conquered the capital of Byzantine Empire, Constantinople (presently, Istanbul) in 1453 under Mehmet Al-Fateh. Subsequently, the Ottoman Empire replaced the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine Empire) as the major power in the Eastern Mediterranean. The fall of Constantinople sent a shockwaves throughout Christendom due to the important position played by the city's as the bastion of Christian Europe against advancement of Muslim Asia. The fall of the city's also signified the gained of Muslim's foothold in Europe as permanently unchallengeable till present. In addition, it can be seen that the mass

²⁸Yahya Başkan, "Orhan Bey'in Bizans İmparatoru Kantakuzeneos'un Kızı Theodora İle Evliliği", *Tarih Dergisi*, Vol. 2, No. 66 (2017), 47-61.

²⁹Bogdan Murgescu and Halil Bertkay, *The Ottoman Empire*, Edited by Christina Koulouri, (2nd ed.), Athen: Center of Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, 2005.

conversion of Christian to Islam in Balkan area is voluntarily, while non-Muslims was able to profess their religion freely and given autonomy to administer their affairs through “millet” system.³⁰ As part of social tolerance policy, Muslims and Christians co-exist peacefully within the Empire. This can be seen by many churches and the present population in Balkan still dominated by Orthodox Christian.

The Ottoman empire reshapes Europe

The Ottoman Empire dominated the South Eastern Europe for almost 500 years before the greatest Muslim empire of all time collapsed after World War 1 (in 1908-1922). Due to its size, and length of its domination, the Ottoman Empire has a tremendous historical importance in shaping western civilization. As compare to Andalus and Granada previously, the Ottoman Empire is considered as the biggest political power in Europe due to its territory occupied most of part that had been ruled under the old Roman Empire. In addition, the Empire managed to inscribe strongly their identification as part of Europe,³¹ their legacy of millet system presently which was still in practise, and its predecessor. Turkey indirectly holds soft sphere of power towards ex-Ottoman’s splitted countries in Balkan area.³²

Ottoman’s contribution can be the evidence from their expertise in arts and crafts.³³ At their height of power, they are leader in cartography and also has influenced western musicians such as Mozart and

³⁰James R. Payton Jr, “Ottoman Millet, Religious Nationalism, and Civil Society: Focus on Kosovo”, *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2006), 11-23.

³¹Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

³²Michael Birnbaum, “Turkey Brings a Gentle Version of the Ottoman Empire Back to the Balkans”, *The Guardian*, April 2, 2013, accessed on February 5, 2019 (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/apr/02/bosnia-turkey-ottoman-influence-balkans-sarajevo>).

³³Carma Wadley, “Ottomans Had a Big Impact on Western Civilization”, *Deseret News*, August 15, 2002, accessed on February 20, 2019 (<https://www.deseretnews.com/article/931174/Ottomans-had-a-big-impact-on-Western-civilization.html>).

Beethoven. One of the biggest contributions of Ottoman in shaping Europe perhaps can be considered as developing social integration of multi-religions within Europe. This is because throughout the history, Christendom tends to perceive other religion as heretical and Vatican altogether with State's under its dominant tend to violate any signed peace-treaty and practise mass expulsion and conversion to Christian. The legal tolerance during Ottoman Empire can be viewed in present day through the existence of Muslims, Christians and Jews communities in Balkan area. Compare to Catholic "reconquista" (reclamation) of Iberian Peninsula which caused expulsion and forced conversion toward Christianity, including burning of valuable knowledge, the Ottoman Empire does not seek forced conversion due to financial interest in non-Muslims who obliged to pay extra taxed.³⁴ This situation indeed has brought stability in the region itself and allowed the preservation of multicultural and self-identity of ethnicities through *millet system* practice.

In addition, by replacing the Byzantine Empire, indirectly the Ottoman Empire has reshaped the geography of Europe itself, brought the Islamic rule and Islamic identity with them. For the past centuries, Christendom believes that Europe is a sacred land only for them, which creates egoism and supremacy of the western countries especially for the Christian kingdoms who against the Asian civilization, specifically the Muslim. The hope of Vatican to extinguish the light of Islam within Christendom did not end well, thanks to Ottoman Empire several countries in Balkan area, as an example of these countries have big number of Muslims population; Albania, Kosovo and Bosnia & Herzegovina. And Muslims also widely spreaded in another Balkan regions such as in Greek, Serbia, Montenegro

³⁴Svetoslav Ribolov, "The Orthodox Church in the Ottoman Empire and Its Perspectives for Theological Dialogue", *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*, Vol. 33, Issue 2 (2013), 7-24.

and Croatia. The establishment of Islam in Balkan, genuinely called by scholars as Balkan Islam or European Islam.³⁵

Contemporary identification of Europe

The event of Catholic' declination of power saw the separation of state and individual life from religious control. There were several occasions that have led to such declination events such as the power struggle between Pope Gregory VI and Henry IV and the age of Renaissance which accelerated the process, when people started to think out of the box in seeking for truth. In the 16th century, Martin Luther who became fed up with the church practise of selling indulgences and he began the Protestant Reformation which has divided Europe geographically into the Protestant North and Catholic south.³⁶ The advancement of scientific revolution such as the emergence of philosophy by Aristotle, Galileo Galilei's theory of solar system and Copernican's theory of the universe have shaken the foundation of beliefs that has been preached by the church.³⁷ Through these occasional events, the unity of the European continent in terms of religion had been broken. The introduction of secularism and national identity become the ways in shaping the identity of Europe. Since the signing of the Treaty of Rome 1957 which has established the European Economic Community (EEC) and initiated the on-going process of European Integration, the western European societies have undergone a rapid, drastic and seemingly irreversible process of secularization. The limitation power of religious bodies,

³⁵Xavier Bougarel, "Balkan Muslim Diasporas and the Idea of a "European Islam", *Uppsala Multiethnic Papers*, Vol. 49, (2005), 147-65.

³⁶Jerry Pillay, "Reformation and Transformation Today: Essentials of Reformation Tradition and Theology as Seen from the Perspectives of the South", *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, Vol. 73, No. 3, (2017), 1-6.

³⁷Nicholas P. Leveillee, "Copernicus, Galileo, and the Church: Science in a Religious World", *Inquiries Journal*, Vol. 3. No. 5, (2011), 1-2.

some countries constitution have invoked Christianity, religious diverse society and raised numbers of self-declared atheism and agnostics have diminished shared identity of Christianity.³⁸

The contemporary identification of Europe undeniably became an interested topic to discuss. The declination of Pope’s power, emergence of secularism and nationalism, and also the raising of Islam have shaped the latest identification of Europe. Presently, Islam is the fastest growing religion in the sacred land of Christendom due to large migration of Muslims, with solid statistic evidence that it might be tripled by 2050.³⁹

Table 1: Effect of Migration on European Population⁴⁰

	2010	2016	2050	2050	2050
			Zero- migration	Medium migration	High migration
Muslims	19, 5 mil	25,8 mil	35, 8 mil	57,9 mil	75,6 mil
Non- Muslims	495, 3 mil	495,1 mil	445.9 mil	459,1 mil	463.0 mil
Total	514, 8 mil	520,830,000	481,7 mil	516, 9 mil	538, 6 mil

The rising of Muslim in Europe has made Islam as the second largest religion after Christian. The term of “Muslim Europe” can no longer be erased nor modified as it has covered the Muslims’ presence in the

³⁸Ronan McCrea, “How to Hobble Religion Contrary to Popular Belief, Migration from Muslim Countries Is One Reason Why Europe Is Becoming More Secular, Not Less.” *Aeon*, June 17, 2013, accessed on February 10, 2019 (<https://aeon.co/essays/is-migration-making-europe-more-secular>).

³⁹Harriet Sherwood, “Muslim Population in Some EU Countries Could Triple, Says Report”, *The Guardian*, November 29, 2017, accessed on February 10, 2019 (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/29/muslim-population-in-europe-could-more-than-double>)

⁴⁰Conrad Hackett, Phillip Connor, Marcin Stonawski, and Michaela Potancokova, “Europe’s Growing Muslim Population: Muslims Are Projected to Increase as a Share of Europe’s Population - Even With...” *Pew Research Center*, 2017.

European countries, largely in Balkan area. Although, some countries were fear on the rising of Muslim, they have been integrated into the European society in the last decades, contributed to its economy, its culture, and have developed a peaceful-attitude of Islam that enables them to integrate into Western culture.⁴¹ Some European countries were reluctant to recognize the true history of the ‘Christian roots of Europe’ in their new constitutions and it has sparked the dubious identification. This is because mentioning Christianity and God was considered too controversial and will spark furious opposition from secularism and Protestant countries, and also considered wrong to exclude Muslims and Jews regarding on the religious reference.⁴²

Based on the historical perspective, it is concluded that Europe is a Christendom domain due to anti-pluralism and majority of countries adhere to Christianity. The expulsion of Muslims in Granada and joint-crusade against Muslims in Sicily and Ottoman Empire shows the alliance of late European countries against presence of Muslims in Europe. In addition, the transition power from state to church during Medieval Age shows how Christianity permeated in all stages of European’ people’s life, ranging from individual values, laws, cultures, politics and knowledge. The fall of Iberian Peninsula and Sicily to Muslims, should be marked as the beginning of new identity of Europe, as a multiculturalism continent. However, this multiculturalism idea and social tolerance among Abrahamic religions was not so welcoming among late European kingdoms. The fall of Constantinople, marked a new chapter, changed drastically the political landscape and the geography of Europe. The South Eastern Europe or Balkan

⁴¹David Stavrou, “No, Europe Isn’t Returning to the Bosom of Islam”, *Haaretz*, October 18, 2018, accessed on February 11, 2019 (<https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/no-europe-isn-t-returning-to-the-bosom-of-islam-1.6572926>)

⁴²Ian Black, “Christianity Bedevils Talks on EU Treaty.” *The Guardian*, May 25, 2004, accessed on February 11, 2019 (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/may/25/eu.religion>)

were known as the European Muslim. In addition, it became the permanent door for Islam to spread more widely into the Western Europe, with the practice of the Ottoman “millet system” as they promoted social tolerance and multiculturalism of religions which was invalidly to be practiced under the Christianity rule. Religious pluralism practised by Ottoman have brought three Abrahamic religions co-existing peacefully which in later years play pivotal role in shaping the current identification of Europe.

The increasing of the Muslims’ presence in the European countries making the continent hardly longer to be recognized as a single identity based on the Christianity. As written by famous Anglo-French writer and historian, Hillaire Beloc, “Europe will return to the Faith, or she will perish. The Faith is Europe, and the Europe is the Faith”.⁴³ The quote strongly signifies the unbroken relationship between Christianity and Europe. However, the current situation shows otherwise where the Christianity is losing grips on the modern society of European. The issue of gay marriages, rising of atheism, abortion and separation of Protestant and Catholics have made it harder to solidify the position of Christianity within the society. Moreover, the sharply increasing secularism which made Christianity as a default has gone and shown majority of young people becoming non-Christian. For instances, 70% of young people in United Kingdom is identified with no religion, with the largest recorded in Czech Republic 91% and average score around 50% in other European countries.⁴⁴

Furthermore, as mentioned before this paper agreed to the Europe is being Christendom in the past time due to their intolerable action against

⁴³Russell Shaw, “Secularists Erase Christianity from European History.” *The Catholic World Report*, August 3, 2017, accessed on February 13, 2019 (<https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2017/08/03/secularists-erase-christianity-from-european-history/>).

⁴⁴Harriet Sherwood, “Christianity as Default Is Gone’: The Rise of a Non-Christian Europe.” *The Guardian*, March 21, 2018, accessed on February 13, 2019 (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/21/christianity-non-christian-europe-young-people-survey-religio>).

religion pluralism within their domain, but to deny any root of Islamic presence within the domain during that time and its role in forming Europe is totally unacceptable. This is because during Golden Age of Cordova, Muslim civilization surpassed entire Europe civilization and its scientific advancement and manuscripts became European's reference. Through this knowledge, the European has managed to reach the Age of Renaissance and in later years they have developed their own civilization and become the centre of the world. However, the contribution given by Muslim scholar and Islamic civilization's achievement to the world and the European Renaissance have not been received based on the recognition.⁴⁵ It is something to be pondering, why this huge contribution by Muslims never got any attention and it seems to be buried by the time. The lack of this recognition and Islamic roles in European claimed to be due of religious animosity towards Islam and a sense of inferiority in Europe have been partly responsible for European reticence in acknowledging their debt to earlier Muslim works.⁴⁶ It seems that by acknowledging Muslim contribution, subsequently will jeopardise dominance of western cultural and its hegemony. Furthermore, it is a crucial measure to be taken to protect fundamental concept that Europe was founded based on the Judeo-Christian values and hardship gone through by the early Christian followers who were martyrdom during the early period of Christianity. Because of that, the boundaries were set up between Islam culture and Christian culture. These arguments were supported by some of scholars⁴⁷ who claimed that the European were fear of that real multiculturalism

⁴⁵Ahmed Essa and Othman Ali, *Studies In Islamic Civilization The Muslim Contribution to the Renaissance*, Edited by Anas S. Al-Shaikh-Ali and Shiraz Khan. 1st ed. London: The International Institute of Islamic Thought , 2012.

⁴⁶Nayef R.F Al-Rodhan, *The Role of the Arab-Islamic World in the Rise of the West: Implications for Contemporary Trans-Cultural Relations*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

⁴⁷Gabriele Marranci, "Multiculturalism, Islam and the Clash of Civilisations Theory: Rethinking Islamophobia", *Culture and Religion*, Vol. 5, No.1 (2004), 105-117.

environment which might transform what Europe today is, which includes Islam. Also, Europe perceives Islam as a transcruptive force that, through transculturation processes, they might be able to challenge the alleged Judaeo-Christian heritage of Europe.⁴⁸

Presently, to suggest that the European continent was as Christendom is contestable due to the diversity of religions, gradual movement towards secularization and dechristianization. Albeit, the majority of Europe identified themselves as Christian, many of them live their lives without adhering to Christian values, which accelerated the process of dechristianization.⁴⁹ In fact, by claiming that the European was the Christian identity after the fall of Byzantine Empire is still questionable unless it specifically focuses on the Western part only. This is because after the fall of the Byzantine Empire and the territories has been conquered by the Ottomans as seen as an area under Islamic rules. The Ottomans have brought along them the new administrative order, primarily based on Islamic Sharia law.⁵⁰ The implementation of Sharia law in Balkan area and the presence of Muslim rules diminished the sphere of Christendom in South Eastern Europe. Therefore, calling Europe (Eastern and Western) as Christendom is contentious.

It is undebatable that Europe is rooted from Christianity, but saying Islam ingrained in European should also not being indisputable. The history of Europe is complex. However, since the chronology of the early Europe is Paganism, Judeo-Christian, Christianity and Islam, accordingly. Henceforth, denying the term of Muslim Europe is totally disagreeable.

⁴⁸Barnor Hesse, *Introduction: Un/Settled Multiculturalism*. London: Zed Books, 2000.

⁴⁹Isabelle de Gaulmyn and Jean-Christophe Ploquin, "Is Europe Still Christian." *La Croix International*, January 14, 2019, accessed on February 13, 2019 (<https://international.la-croix.com/news/is-europe-still-christian/9224#>)

⁵⁰Ema Miljkovic, "Ottoman Heritage in the Balkans: The Ottoman Empire in Serbia", *Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Vol. 2, No. 2009, (2014), 129-137.

The debate of European to loss identity in fearing of Islam is considered wildly unreasonable, because Islam has been already there since the establishment of Andalus and the existence of Muslims in Sicily. Whether by the conquest or not, it is should not be a matter of today, as many continents and several countries unwillingly accepted that they have been colonized and converted during colonialism period without denying the truth about it. It is like denying the reality or historical events that already taken place and manipulating history, just to hold up supremacy thinking of Christian civilization against Muslim civilization.

Besides, referring to the contemporary situation in Europe, it is no longer should be identified with Christianity or “Christian club” term. The rising of secularism, atheism and hedonism have lessened the spirit of Christianity and its value within individual, altogether the society. It is a matter of time whether people are ready to accept the current reality or to stay in blind foldedly. According to the think tank organization Pew Research Centre, Christianity has shifted from Europe to Africa.⁵¹ With that, it is believed that Europe is no longer the centre of gravity for Christianity. The rising of Muslims which has already been integrated culturally and socially should not be undermined as they already becomes part of the European communities.

Conclusion

The myth of a “Christian Europe” based on the identification of the European continent solely with Christianity should be modified and altered. This is a malicious and mythical claim that has been calamitously employed throughout history in most episodes of ethnic cleansing against non-Christians in Europe, from the purging of Pagans and expulsion of

⁵¹David Masci, “Christianity Poised to Continue Its Shift from Europe to Africa”, *Pew Research Center*, April 7, 2015, accessed on February 12, 2019 (<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/04/07/christianity-is-poised-to-continue-its-southward-march/>)

Muslims and Jews from Spain in 1492. The entire Christian Europe has been the aspiration of some political and religious ideologues for centuries but genuinely it was a historical aberration. This is because Europe was religiously diverse, with vibrant Jewish and Muslim communities. To deny any presence of them, especially Muslim position is like putting Europe annals of history in void. The factual proof of Europe Muslim history and heritage is still needed because one cannot mass murder a people who do not exist.

Furthermore, it seemed that Muslim existed in Europe for a while and contributed to the European civilization. Although one might forgive what happened at the end, one must not forget that Muslim once flourished from Spain and Sicily, and later became mighty political power in the area of South Eastern Europe (Balkan) region during the reign of Ottoman Empire. Also, it is a fact that Europe was not only Christian but also Muslim in the past, as it is today. Discarding Islam legacy and its foundation is one of the worst history legacies in humankind. The concept of “winner” has rewritten a history should no longer be taking place in the academic world nor in the history book. As our civilization moving forward, the truth will uncover sooner or later. The denial and arrogance of Western academicians and politicians in recognizing Muslim roles in shaping Europe, subsequently implying that Muslim have no place in Europe because they are “foreigners” is groundless. In addition, rejection of Turkey to be parts of Europe on the basis of Muslim country is also totally baseless. Ironically, in term of ontological and epistemological, the evidence of Muslim in Europe are very clear and solid, the reasons why until now Muslim position is still not being acknowledged is really amusing and confusing. Is the supremacy of Westerner against Asian, notably Muslim should be prolong? The question of supremacy thinking on the belief that Westerners are somehow superior to people of other

racial backgrounds, and should therefore politically, economically, and socially rule over non-white should be upheld? This way of thinking is a disease that if not quarantined or contained will keep erupting in extreme ways and will destroy humanity values.

In conclusion, this paper suggested that Islam does have its presence in Europe since the establishment of the Umayyad dynasty in Andalus and Sicily. The presence of Islam in Europe was later strengthened by the Ottomans in Balkan area as the imperial superpower for six centuries. The installation of Muslim in Iberian Peninsula and Sicily, promotion of social cultural interaction called *convivencia* has promoted an interfaith life in Europe⁵². The cross cultural existence in Europe was not only succeeded after the occupancy of the South Eastern Europe by the Ottomans, but also has shaped the geography of Europe until present. Perhaps, it is acceptable to justify that Europe (Eastern and Western) has already dwindled into multiculturalism instead of Christian's sole domain after the inception of Muslims in Iberian Peninsula.

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⁵²Anna Akasoy, "Review Article: Convivencia And Its Discontents: Interfaith Life In Al-Andalus." *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. Cambridge University Press. Vol. 42, No. 3, (2010), 489-499.

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