

The Practical Dilemma of Tariq Ramadan's "Euro - Islam"

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ABSTRACT: The concept of "Euro-Islam" proposed by Tariq Ramadan aims to carve out a middle way that reconciles religious beliefs with national identity. Nevertheless, achieving a consensus between Europe and Islam is no simple task. On one hand, due to his unwavering stance in speaking up for Muslims, he has been jointly shunned by both the European left-wing alliance and right-wing populist parties. On the other hand, his modern interpretations of Islamic classics have breached the red lines of religious conservatives, sparking intense dissatisfaction and resistance from traditional Salafists. Under such a dual onslaught, the proposition of "Euro-Islam" is facing ever more profound challenges. Currently, with the rise of populism in Europe, the social environment for Muslims to integrate has undergone drastic changes. New social movements, such as feminism, are hostile towards Ramadan, suspecting that his "doublespeak" masks his aspirations for political Islam. Moreover, Ramadan's proposition has been criticized by other Islamic scholars as highly utopian. Compounded by the evident personal bias in the examples he cites, its credibility and persuasiveness have been significantly undermined.

KEYWORDS: *Tariq Ramadan; Euro - Islam; Populism; Practical Dilemma*

I. INTRODUCTION

Ramadan is regarded as a bridge connecting Islamic culture and European culture. He encourages Muslims living in Europe to adhere to their religious beliefs while stepping out of the "Islamic enclaves", becoming model law-abiding citizens in Europe and contributing to the development of European society with Islamic wisdom. Ramadan's proposition of "Euro - Islam" has won the following of many young Euro - Islam. However, due to his strong religious family background, modern interpretations of religious theology, and the principle of persistently speaking up for Muslims, he has also been questioned, criticized, and even negated by European intellectuals and Islamic scholars.

II. FAMILY BACKGROUND AND THE ORIGIN OF THOUGHTS

Tariq Ramadan (hereinafter "Ramadan") is the most influential Muslim intellectual and religious philosopher in contemporary Europe. He was born on August 26, 1962, into an Egyptian family in Geneva, Switzerland, the family's sixth child. His mother, Hani, was the daughter of Hassan al-Banna (hereinafter "Banna"), the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, and his father, Said Ramadan (hereinafter "Said"), was a follower of Banna and one of the core figures of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. After Nasser assumed power, the Muslim Brotherhood was severely suppressed for its radical ideology and political stances and was subsequently forcibly dissolved. Said fled to Saudi Arabia, where he established the World Muslim League with the Jordanian Kamil al-Sharif [1]. In 1958, Said moved to Geneva, Switzerland, and with the support of Saudi Arabia, he founded the Islamic Center in 1960 [2]. This center was regarded as the outpost of the Muslim Brotherhood in Europe and an overseas stronghold against Nasser's regime. In 1988, the center established Bank al Taqwa. In 2001, the U.S. intelligence department identified the bank as a financier for Hamas, the Armed Islamic Group (in Algeria), Ennahda (one of the Tunisian political parties), and Al-Qaeda, and the bank was shut down. Ramadan firmly claimed that his family had nothing to do with the bank, but Mustafa Machour, the supreme guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, insisted that Ramadan's father, Said, was the founder of the bank because Said's name appeared in the bank documents [3].

In 1991, Ramadan went to Egypt with his wife and children to study Islamic philosophy at Al-Azhar University. However, instead of accepting the long-term study plan offered by the university, he completed the five-year curriculum within 20 months. Islamic law and jurisprudence had a profound impact on him, sparking great inspiration. Ramadan once idealized Egypt as a spiritual haven. Nevertheless, the lifestyle in Egypt was

difficult for him to adapt to. After returning to Switzerland, he wrote a doctoral dissertation on his maternal grandfather, Banna. His academic committee rejected the paper, deeming it partisan and non-academic. Ramadan protested against this decision, which led to the establishment of a second academic committee. Eventually, his paper was accepted, but without honors [4]. After experiencing the vastly different social environments of Europe and Islam firsthand, he gained deeper insights into a series of significant philosophical issues, such as religious traditions versus development and change, the home countries of immigrants versus the host countries, religious sacredness versus secular modernity, and religious identity versus national identity. Different from the religious-political theological ideas advocated by Banna, Ramadan is not keen on using Islamic ideas to transform European culture or rebuilding a pan-Islamic state in Europe. Instead, he is committed to securing a living space for Muslims within the European cultural system.

III. THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTION OF "EURO - ISLAM"

1. Historical Background and Current Situation

Europeans have a long history of interacting with Muslims in the Middle East. The well-known trade routes along the Mediterranean and the Red Sea have facilitated the exchange and mutual learning of material civilizations between the two sides. Coupled with population movements caused by conquests, migrations, and missionary activities, Muslims have settled in Europe very early and have lived there ever since. Judging from the current situation, although Muslims who came to Europe earlier and have obtained citizenship are legally citizens of their host countries, they are still excluded from the mainstream society in terms of culture and politics. In recent years, the situation for Muslim immigrants arriving in Europe has been even more difficult. European labor laws, using social welfare programs, have driven up the recruitment costs for immigrants, resulting in poor living conditions for Muslim immigrants. Currently, they all look forward to integrating into a European society that is post-Muslim and post-Christian and represents a universal civic order. Regarding Muslims living in Europe, European countries are also assessing the situation and formulating different integration strategies. These strategies can generally be summarized into two approaches: assimilation and cultural pluralism. The assimilation approach emphasizes that immigrants adjust themselves to align with the core mechanisms and associated social expectations of their environment... while the cultural pluralism approach attaches more importance to retaining and recognizing the cultural and ethnic differences of immigrant groups [5].

2. Ramadan's "Middle Way"

Ramadan's "Euro - Islam" has blazed a "middle way" [6]. In Arabic, it is called wasatiyyah, which means seeking balance and moderation in all aspects. This enables Muslims to remain loyal to Islamic principles while accepting European and American cultures and ultimately taking root in Western society [7]. By means of reforming Islamic education, strengthening the dialogue among civilizations, reconstructing civic ethics, and encouraging civic participation, an overlapping consensus and a symbiotic reconciliation with Europe and the West can be achieved [8].

Ramadan not only advocates solving the integration problem through educational reform and enhanced dialogue but also emphasizes fulfilling civic responsibilities and obligations through social participation and constructing a compensatory culture. That is, on the basis of the universality of Islam, a sense of Muslim citizenship is formed. This sense of citizenship promotes the development of justice, rights, and virtues [9], making the compensatory culture a beneficial supplement to modern democracy. At the same time, it overcomes the moral decline and social ills caused by European hedonism and materialism, resists the unreasonable international economic order resulting from globalization and neoliberalism, creates an inclusive European society with a rational distribution of wealth, enables the concept of the European welfare state to reach an "overlapping consensus" with the Islamic sense of community, and achieves "symbiotic reconciliation" between Muslims and European citizens.

3. Resolving the Religious-Secular Opposition

To address the dichotomous confrontation between the religious and the secular, Ramadan demarcates religious belief and citizenship into two domains with distinct attributes. Becoming a European Muslim does not equate to assimilation, for assimilation entails the loss of identity and faith, whereas Muslims can embrace multiple identities. To better integrate Muslims into Europe, Ramadan actively promotes religious innovation within Islam. He opposes implementing the "pure Islamic system" in European society because the fundamentalist cognitive system and religious practices would fragment and isolate the Muslim community in Europe, plunging it deep into the quagmire of self-other conflicts.

Ramadan, who self-identifies as a Salafist (a follower of the Prophet), has a definition of Salafism that contradicts traditional Islamic jurists and religious scholars. Traditional Salafists, also known as extreme Salafists, insist on reverting to the "true" Islam of the Muhammad era, establishing an orthodox religious state, and refusing

to compromise with modernity. In contrast, Ramadan's Salafism reinterprets and innovatively annotates Islamic classics and religious laws, seeking a legitimate basis for Muslims to integrate into European society and keeping Islam in dynamic alignment with social development. Islam does not oppose modernization, change, or innovation. Although the Quran represents an authority that surpasses secular laws, it does not imply dogmatic adherence to archaic ways. Historically, exegetes and jurists have incorporated subjective, era-specific understandings into the interpretation of the Quran and Hadith, but such understandings ought to be adapted to local conditions and changing times rather than being confined by the barriers of traditional authority. Ramadan concurs with many contemporary Islamic reformers. Their propositions empower religious innovators to interpret the classics, thus facilitating Islamic innovation to adapt to modern social development and providing religious assurances for Muslims to engage in social, political, and economic activities in Europe.

4. Differentiating Islamic Principles

To further eliminate the roadblocks to reform, Ramadan draws a distinction between the immutable and timeless principles of faith and those elements in Islam that are open to change. He contends that the scriptures and Hadith encompass both unchanging, absolute, and transcendent messages across history, as well as content that evolves with the passage of time. Islamic reform efforts must clearly differentiate between these two kinds of information. He points out that certain principles or rituals are fundamental and non-negotiable, demanding strict adherence regardless of temporal or geographical shifts. For instance, the six articles of faith and the five pillars of Islam fall under the category of unchangeable tenets [10].

Conversely, when it comes to the principles subject to change, there is significant flexibility. With the exception of the obligations (*wajib*) and prohibitions (*haram*) clearly laid out in the Quran, all else is deemed permissible. Islam sanctions any actions that do not contravene the established principles, regarding them as manifestations of its inherent freedom. This permissive principle within Islam emboldens Muslims to explore new possibilities, provided they steer clear of taboos. Thus, Muslims can wholeheartedly embrace Europe as their new home. Islam has the capacity to take root in diverse cultures, yet these varying cultural manifestations do not result in multiple, distinct Islams. Ramadan reassures Euro-Islam that even if their lifestyles diverge from those of their parents and grandparents back in the East, they remain steadfast in their belief in one and the same Islam [11].

IV. THE THORNY PATH TO REALIZING THE IDEAL

1. High Hopes Dashed by Setbacks

European countries placed high hopes in Ramadan's concept of "Euro-Islam". They expected him to challenge traditional Islamic tenets, foster a sense of national identity among domestic Muslim groups, and guide Euro-Islam and Islam along the right path of development. As such, European countries had previously engaged Ramadan as a consulting expert or political advisor on contemporary Islamic issues, tasking him with helping to formulate policies for Muslim immigrants. However, the implementation of his ideas has not been smooth sailing. On the contrary, it has been rife with doubts and smear campaigns, and in his sixties, he has even been involved in a series of lawsuits.

2. Visa Rejection and Policy Support in the UK

In 2004, Tariq Ramadan was offered a tenured professorship at the University of Notre Dame in the United States. However, due to his public support for the Palestinian liberation cause, the Bush administration denied him a visa, alleging that he was involved in supporting and financing terrorism. Consequently, he was unable to assume the position.

Following the 2005 London bombings, Ramadan firmly backed the British government's Islamic policies and was thus invited to join the "Prevent Extremism Together" committee. For a long time afterward, he served as a commentator for the BBC, actively projecting the image of Euro-Islam he had envisioned. Nevertheless, the tranquility was shattered by the "Guardian incident" in 2007. In protest against the British prime minister's support for the Iraq War, on June 4 of that year, Ramadan published an article titled "Blair can no longer deny a link exists between terrorism and foreign policy" in *The Guardian*. With his characteristic incisive logical reasoning, he took issue with the then-current British anti-terrorism strategies. He held that:

The problem plaguing the UK doesn't lie in Muslims' failure to embrace British values. Instead, it pivots on the disheartening reality that the British government has assumed a duplicitous stance, both on the domestic front and in its foreign policies. The notion of the 'terrorist threat' has swiftly gained ascendancy, prodding the government into headstrong actions and unilateral pursuits in the battle against 'radicalization and extremism'. Today's core issue isn't centered around so-called 'fundamental values' per se but rather the chasm separating these values from the day-to-day social and political realities. The dispensation of justice is, distressingly, often contingent upon one's ethnicity, whether they are Black, Asian, or Muslim. Equal opportunity, more often than not, remains nothing but an illusion. Young citizens hailing from cultural and religious 'minorities' find themselves fettered by institutionalized racism. Rather than doggedly demanding that Muslims comply with the 'duty of

integration', society must step up and bear its 'duty of coherence'. British society bears the onus of reconciling with the values it publicly espouses; politicians are duty-bound to match their lofty rhetoric with concrete deeds. While the invasion of Iraq can by no means serve as a moral pretext for the terrorist attacks on innocent Londoners, it is utterly preposterous to turn a blind eye to the very real political link between the two events. [12]

In the article, Ramadan neither absolved Muslims of responsibility nor laid the blame solely on external factors. He held that both the British government and the Muslim community ought to shoulder their respective responsibilities and foster a critical political consciousness. This piece of writing sparked widespread opposition among the European public. Subsequently, David Goodhart, the editor-in-chief of Prospect magazine, published "An Open Letter to Tariq Ramadan". In the letter, he contended that Ramadan's critique of the implementation of British justice was an outlandish exaggeration, which had eroded Ramadan's credibility. Although reforming British society was of great significance, it was equally vital to alter the mindset and ideology of radicalized British Muslims, as well as to address the root causes behind the recurrence of terrorism in the UK. [13] This incident also marked the beginning of Ramadan's estrangement from the British government. Afterward, Ramadan redirected his focus to the Netherlands.

3. Setbacks in the Netherlands

In 2007, Ramadan took up the position of visiting professor at Erasmus University in Rotterdam. Concurrently, at the invitation of the Rotterdam City Council, he assumed the role of an integration advisor for the multicultural population. Ramadan devised a "pillarization" integration system tailored to the Netherlands. The metaphor of pillars, reminiscent of a Greek temple where the roof is upheld by multiple independent columns, implies that the Netherlands is made up of diverse groups, including Catholics, Protestants, Communists, and Liberals.

However, this system didn't escape scrutiny and criticism. Gilles Kepel, for instance, took issue with it. He argued that while multiculturalists and Islamists might share similar short-term outlooks for Europe, Islamists would ultimately exploit pillarization as a stepping stone towards the Islamization of the continent. Kepel wrote that this notion of "minority Islam" promoted making concessions to European society as a strategic maneuver until the whole of Europe was gradually transformed into an Islamic region, much like what had happened to the Byzantine Empire in history. [14] These views found support and echoed among the Dutch right-wing.

Subsequently, an incident in August 2009 instantly became the focal point of Dutch public opinion and precipitated Ramadan's decline in the Netherlands. Ramadan had taken on the role of hosting a program for Press TV, an English-language news channel funded by the Iranian government. This decision stirred great discontent among the Dutch populace. Eventually, on August 18, the Rotterdam city municipality and Erasmus University jointly released a statement, terminating Ramadan's visiting professorship at the university. In response, Ramadan penned the article "An Open Letter to my Detractors in The Netherlands". He perceived this as yet another onslaught following previous accusations of "double standards", "homophobia", and "devaluing women". He wrote:

"When I accepted the offer from PressTV Ltd., in London (my sole contact was with the British producers who were proposing a concept to the network), I did so on the clear condition that I would be free to select my topics and that I would have full editorial freedom within the parameters of a weekly program dealing with religion, philosophy and contemporary issues. My method, from the start, has been to explore these issues without lending support to the Iranian regime, and without compromising myself." [15]

4. Academic and Legal Troubles in the UK and Beyond

Ramadan then relocated to the University of Oxford, where he held an academic post until 2017, when multiple rape accusations were leveled against him. From 2009 to 2017, he had served as a professor of contemporary Islamic studies. In the UK, Ramadan had attained the status of an established scholar, thanks to his profound academic accomplishments. However, towards the end of 2017, Ramadan was successively confronted with three rape accusations, which sent shockwaves through France and continued to gain momentum. BFMTV in France reported that, during the three-month evidence-collection phase, the police investigating the case also unearthed numerous pornographic and libertine emails and text messages sent by Ramadan, a far cry from the esteemed image he had long projected. The Daily Telegraph in the UK characterized the case as the most significant incident in France since the inception of the "Me Too" movement against sexual assault and harassment.

Ramadan, for his part, vehemently denied all the accusations, insisting that it was a "smear campaign" orchestrated by his long-standing adversaries in France. Nevertheless, he opted to resign from the University of Oxford. Subsequently, the university issued a statement clarifying that Ramadan's resignation did not imply an admission of guilt or a determination of culpability. On February 22, 2018, the French Court of Appeal rejected Ramadan's request for bail, citing his health condition and the plea from his lawyers to end his preventive detention. To date, the French courts have yet to reach a verdict on his case. In addition to the French accusations,

a Swiss court also charged him with rape. The plaintiff lodged a complaint ten years after the alleged incident, stating that she was inspired by the French case.

In May 2023, due to insufficient physical evidence to substantiate the plaintiff's claims, in line with the criminal law principle of presumption of innocence, Ramadan was acquitted by the Swiss court and awarded state compensation of approximately 154 euros. This once - renowned Islamic scholar remains under judicial surveillance in France, and it remains uncertain whether he can extricate himself from this crisis. Judging from the various distorted reports and comments by French media and politicians, it is evident that Ramadan will likely continue to face numerous legal challenges in the future.

V. REASONS FOR THE PREDICAMENT UNDER SIEGE

1. Shifting Political and Social Tides

Currently, Tariq Ramadan and his concept of "Euro - Islam" are facing ever more profound challenges in Europe. Besides the adverse effects brought about by the damage to Ramadan's reputation, the stagnation and obstruction can be broadly attributed to four factors. First, the escalating authoritarian tendencies within populism across Europe and the West over the past decade have transformed the social environment necessary for forging a "consensus". Second, the robust growth of new social movements in Europe, especially the upsurge of the feminist movement, is inhospitable to Islamic values and Ramadan himself. Third, the denial and rejection from various academic and religious camps have undermined the credibility of the idea of "Euro - Islam". Fourth, Ramadan's inappropriate use of examples has impaired its validity and persuasiveness.

Populism is a global phenomenon that intricately weaves together mass politics and elite politics, carrying specific ideologies, value orientations, and even policy strategies and political styles. [16] It underscores the notions of "the people" and "people first" while opposing the ideologies and political stances of "elites" and "vested interests". The practical factors fueling populism are the people's discontent with and resistance to social realities. From the vantage point of social development, since the implementation of the "neoliberal" economic development strategy in Europe during the 1980s, the wealth gap in society has been widening, the middle class has gradually contracted, and the living standards of the working class at the bottom have been in continuous decline, thus precipitating a comprehensive crisis across the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres of European society today. European right-wing parties have embraced populism as a political tool, aligning it with nationalism and conservatism and vehemently opposing multiculturalism, free trade, and globalization. After amassing extreme ideologies such as xenophobia, racism, and separatism, they have surged forward and are increasingly emerging as the dominant force in contemporary European politics.

The far-right ideology, positioned at the extreme right end of the right-wing ideological spectrum, combines the dualistic thinking of populism, giving rise to the far-right populist trend of thought. In contemporary times, there are influential far-right populist parties in almost all European countries, and some of them have already come to power. One of the core propositions of these far-right populist parties is anti-immigration (especially targeting Arab refugees from the Middle East and North Africa) and "Islamophobia". Far-right populists define their own ethnic group as "us" and immigrants and other ethnic groups as "them". From this starkly dichotomous perspective, Euro - Islam is extremely disliked and hated by far-right populists. They also accuse Ramadan of being the leader of the "fifth column", claiming that he has misled left-wing politicians with his image as a liberal scholar and his active social engagement, thus concealing his totalitarian attempt to disintegrate and destroy European civilization from within and transform Europe into "Eurabian".

2. Academic and Religious Backlash

Faced with attacks from the European right, Ramadan chose to draw closer to the left. However, because he adheres to his independent academic viewpoints, he has also incurred the dissatisfaction of the left-wing alliance. Left-wing figures have always criticized Ramadan's negative attitude towards abolishing stoning. They believe that Ramadan's so-called integration is merely a temporary compromise and an application of the Islamic principle of Taqiyya. Through a series of maneuvers, such as diluting the representative features of faith and projecting a reassuring image as a scholar, he conceals his true intention of leading Muslim youth down the path of extremism. His concept of "Euro - Islam" is, in essence, the theory of the curvilinear development of Islam, with the ultimate goal of smoothly transplanting Islam into Europe.

The booming new social movements also take a resistant stance similar to that of left-wing and right-wing populism. Originating from the "May 1968" movement in France, new social movements differ from traditional workers' movements. The latter had unified platforms and organizations and focused on demands for economic interests, while new social movements are highly diverse, without specific action plans or clear political strategic positioning. Typical examples include the feminist movement, the green environmental protection movement, and the anti-war and peace movement. "Many Western new social movements emerged under the wing

of traditional left-wing movements" [17]. Among them, the feminist movement vigorously resists Islamic culture regarding women's rights, seeing it as a foreign culture that is "utterly incompatible" with modern European culture, and shows intense rejection.

The French feminist writer Caroline Fourest vehemently questioned and criticized Ramadan in her monograph *Brother Tariq: The Doublespeak of Tariq Ramadan*. After meticulously researching Ramadan's works and speeches in both French and Arabic, she contended that Ramadan was highly proficient in public speaking. He would tailor different content, rhetorical devices, interpretation methods, and even tones according to the audience, subtly crafting a public persona to promote his viewpoints. This bilingual strategy essentially aims to ease contradictions and undermine European civilization from within via the gentle "theory of Islamic development". In this book, Fourest maintained her typical feminist writing style, launching a scathing and critical assault on Ramadan's viewpoints and reputation. Her work was well-received by American right-wingers and was published under the sponsorship of the right-wing publisher "Encounter Books".

Similarly, Ramadan has also faced criticism within academic circles. Bassam Tibi, a German Muslim scholar, has taken issue with Ramadan's use of the term "Euro-Islam" to describe his Salafist ideas. He contends that Ramadan's vision for Euro-Islam is rife with utopian idealism. Ramadan attempts to downplay the disparate natures of the European civilization system and the Islamic revealed religion. However, Islam is not merely a theological religion; it also encompasses a comprehensive set of social norms and economic systems, so conflicts are inevitable. In response to the utopian nature of Ramadan's views, Tibi has proposed the concept of "enlightened Muslim thought". He differentiates between Islamism and Islam, arguing that Islamism is a totalitarian political-religious ideology, while Islam is a religious and cultural system. Democracy and pluralism are incompatible with Islamism but compatible with Islam. Tibi believes that religious beliefs should be practiced privately and kept separate from public arenas such as law, society, and politics. Muslims should reach a consensus with the European value system to become Europeans, on the condition that they accept the secular European laws and institutions that demand the separation of religion and politics. He contends that without rejecting the legacy and theology of Banna, and relinquishing concepts like political Islam, the ummah community, and jihad – all Salafist concepts – Ramadan cannot achieve the Europeanization of Islam. There are only two options: a Europeanized Islam or an Islamized Europe. If the Europeanization of the Islamic enclaves fails, then the Islamization of Europe will be the continent's future. Regarding the Muslim Brotherhood founded by Banna, Tibi regards it as the root of totalitarian Islamism. He points out that the secular civil rights in Europe afford Islamists the opportunity to turn Europe into a battlefield for Islamism. [18]

3. Economic and Image-related Woes

Ramadan has not only weathered criticism from European Islamic scholars but has also drawn the ire of Islamic conservatives. These conservatives hold sway over the lion's share of contemporary European Islamic institutions and monopolize the authority to interpret Islam via religious worship. They have vehemently denounced Ramadan as a perilous propagator of modern ideas, charging that he has betrayed Islam in favor of Europe, made compromising concessions to European culture on matters of principle. Moreover, they accuse him of making the once-intra-Muslim discourse on Islamic law a public spectacle, all to pander to Western sensitivities.

Koutoub Moustapha Sano, the secretary-general of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy, expressed profound dissatisfaction with Ramadan's call for a moratorium on stoning. He cautioned, "If we advocate for an international suspension of corporal punishment, stoning, and the death penalty today, I fear greatly that tomorrow, Western forces might demand that Muslims suspend their Friday prayers." [19] Due to Ramadan's highly public criticism of Muslim countries, six Islamic nations, including Egypt and Tunisia, have branded him *persona non grata*.

In addition, Ramadan has also faced accusations from the economic community. He referred to "neoliberalism" as *Dar al Harb* — "the abode of war", believing that the tenets of Islam are essentially contrary to the basic premises and logic of the neoliberal capitalist system [20], and accusing it of being "an economic logic that kills tens of thousands of people every day" [21]. Although Ramadan encourages Muslims to integrate into European society, he does not endorse the European economic system and resists the neoliberal economic order underlying European society. At the same time, he has high hopes for the Islamic economy. He encourages Muslims to establish an economic system based on Islamic principles to break away from the capitalist logic based on speculation and interest. He believes that the East inherently has a creative potential, which can counteract Western development theories with its own traditional advantages and resist the Western-imposed patterned transformation of the East. He opposes the inclusion of Arab and Muslim countries in the global economic order, as this would sever their own cultural traditions and collective memories, because these cultural traditions and collective memories contain the potential for indigenous innovation. [22]

Regarding this, the commentator Bruce Bawer believes that Ramadan's attitude towards the neoliberal economy has disqualified him from being a builder of the bridge between Islam and Europe. If Muslims are to

succeed in Europe, they must view capitalism as their "engine of wealth" rather than the "source of poverty" [23]. According to Marxist philosophy and economics, the economic base determines the superstructure. The neoliberal economic system in Europe has given rise to the perfection of the democratic system and has a strong social basis. Ramadan's criticism of this economic system reflects not only his rejection of the economic system but also his negation of the European democratic political framework. This economic subversion has attracted more hostility than understanding and resonance.

Although Ramadan has repeatedly professed his support for European democracy and pluralism, adherence to universal religious values, opposition to anti-Semitic violence, and condemnation of terrorist organizations, he often cites the remarks of Yusuf al-Qaradawi as examples in his speeches. Al-Qaradawi, however, is a theologian who endorses terrorism and is notorious for inciting jihad against the West and promoting anti-Semitic ideology. Furthermore, he has also carried on the legacy of Banna and vigorously spread fundamentalist ideas. Regarding this, Paul Berman, a professor at New York University, has accused Ramadan of being inconsistent in denouncing terrorist violence. In his works, Ramadan scattered personal tributes to al-Qaradawi — he successively quoted al-Qaradawi's words, always showing deference to him in a humble manner, as if al-Qaradawi were a wholly reputable scholar. [24] Precisely because of this, Ramadan is also regarded as anti-Israel by Jewish rabbis and frequently comes under repeated attacks from the French Jewish conservative forces.

VI. CONCLUSION

Ramadan's concept of "Euro - Islam" aims to strike a balance between religious and ethnic identity and national identity, facilitating the integration of Muslims into European civil society and their participation in the construction of European public life and civic ethics. To this end, on the one hand, he actively endeavors to present the true face of Islam to Europe, striving to secure discursive space for Euro - Islam; on the other hand, he breaks the religious monopoly held by Islamic conservatives and attempts to transform the mindset of Muslims through innovative interpretations of Islamic law, with the goal of creating a modern Islam that can "coexist harmoniously" with Europe.

Nevertheless, in his attempt to bridge the gap between the "self" of Europe and the "other" of Muslims, he has endured multiple onslaughts from various European political organizations, conservative Islamic organizations, as well as political and academic figures. European far-right parties have exploited populism to stoke "anti-Islam and Islam-hating" sentiments, regarding Ramadan as an out-and-out schemer and deceiver. They accuse him of using duplicitous language to conceal his pursuit of political Islam and have seized the opportunity to unleash a public opinion storm and impose judicial suppression on him. Simultaneously, religious conservative forces criticize and reject his modern interpretations of religion, seeing him as an outcast and traitor.

Ramadan's "Euro - Islam" was initially intended to offer an alternative for conflict prevention through a long-term enlightenment movement. However, the recent rise of populism in Europe has dramatically altered the social environment conducive to reconciliation and symbiosis. And as a role model for Euro - Islam, Ramadan's own life journey is now fraught with difficulties and uncertainties. For "Euro - Islam" to achieve two-way acceptance and be widely embraced, more time, opportunities, and practical adjustments are still essential.

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