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WILL ISLAMOPHOBIA BRING AN END TO THE MULTICULTURALISM?

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Abstract: *Having started after WWII, the immigration of foreigners into Europe started challenging the homogeneity of the European states. The predominantly Christian European countries became tempted by the values of Islam, the religion brought by immigrants. In order to facilitate the accommodation and adaptation of the newcomers, different European countries adopted different approaches to this challenge to the respective national identities. The concept of multiculturalism, as a possible solution to the peaceful coexistence of different cultures, became particularly popular in the last two decades. However, the concept itself has been challenged by the growing racism and xenophobia in Europe. As the most visible manifestation of these sentiments toward immigrants is islamophobia. Many factors contributed to the rise of this phenomenon in Europe, among them the migration, terrorist attacks on European soil in the new millennium and the rise of the Islamic Caliphate in Iraq and Syria. Those events brought to the surface different values of Islam and questioned their compatibility with principles of the secular states in Europe. The prescriptive nature of Islamic religion has brought many hardships to the liberal democracies throughout Europe.*

The long debate about the compatibility of the Islamic beliefs and values with the modern and secular states continues in Europe. The rising islamophobia in Europe is threatening to bring an end to the concept of the multiculturalism. The co-existence of the Christianity and Islam in the contemporary secular and liberal states of Europe is challenged by the fear from Muslims and it remains to be seen if this phenomenon will collapse the multicultural projects in many European countries.

Keywords: *Islamophobia, multiculturalism, religion, Islam.*

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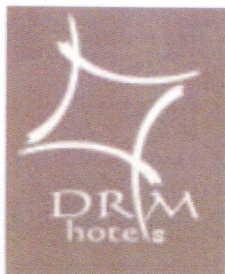
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