**MYTH**

**THERE ARE SPECIFIC "MUSLIM HIGH FERTILITY LAWS"**

Dudley Kirk, renowned American demographer, highlighted the “laws” of “Muslim Natality”:
- Islamic fertility is universally high
- It shows no significant decline
- It is greater than that of neighboring peoples followers of other religions.

(Sudley Kirk, “Factors affecting Moslem natality”, in Population and Society, 1968)

Samuel Huntington gave considerable weight to demography in the clash between North/South, Europe/Arab world, Christianity/Islam:
“*The resurgence of Islam has been fueled by spectacular rates of growth*”


**FACT**

**FERTILITY RATES ARE NOT HOMOGENEOUS ACROSS ISLAMIC COUNTRIES**

- Total Fertility Rate varies worldwide from 8 children for the most fertile populations to 1 child for the less fertile ones.
- Total fertility rates in the 50 Islamic countries come all across this spectrum:

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**ARAB COUNTRIES' FERTILITY HAS BEEN MORE THAN HALVED IN 30 YEARS**

Total Fertility Rate in some Arab countries before transition (1960-70) and in 2005

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**THE WORLD IS IN A LOGIC OF CONVERGENCE**

Demographic transition spread over two centuries in Europe. In Arab countries, it began later, but it is speedier. It took two centuries for Europe to pass from 5 children to 2. It took two or three decades in Tunisia and Morocco.

- France’s present fertility rate stands at 2.01. It is, so to say, higher than Tunisia, Lebanon and Iran.
- The universality of fertility decrease invalidates the concept of an unbridgeable gap between the West and Islam.

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* Research Director of the Institute National d’Etudes Demographiques (INED) in Paris. Expert in the field of relationship between demography and politics, principally in Arab and Muslim countries. Courbage was Scientific Director of the French Institute of the Near East in Beirut and is author of around three hundred and fifty publications, books, articles, reports and teaching material. Together with Emmanuel Todd he added a new dimension to the ongoing debate over the clash of civilizations through predicting the modernization of the Islamic World in their book ‘Le rendez-vous des civilisations’