

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.

(Dudley Kirk, "Factors affecting Moslem natality", in Population and Society, 1968)

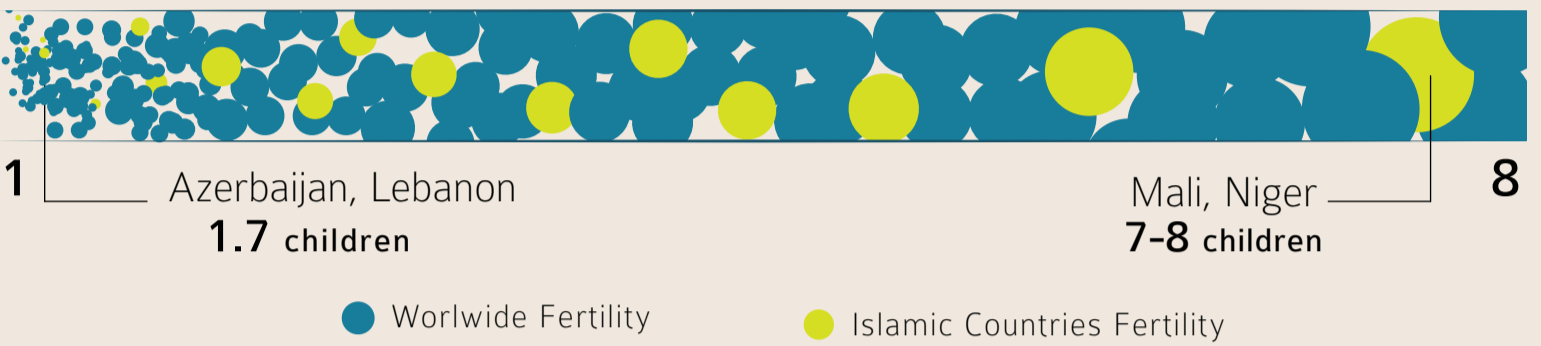
Samuel Huntington gave considerable weight to demography in the clash between North/South, Europe/Arab world, Christianity/Islam: "The resurgence of Islam has been fueled by **spectacular rates of growth**"

(Samuel Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order. Penguin Books, 1996)

FACT

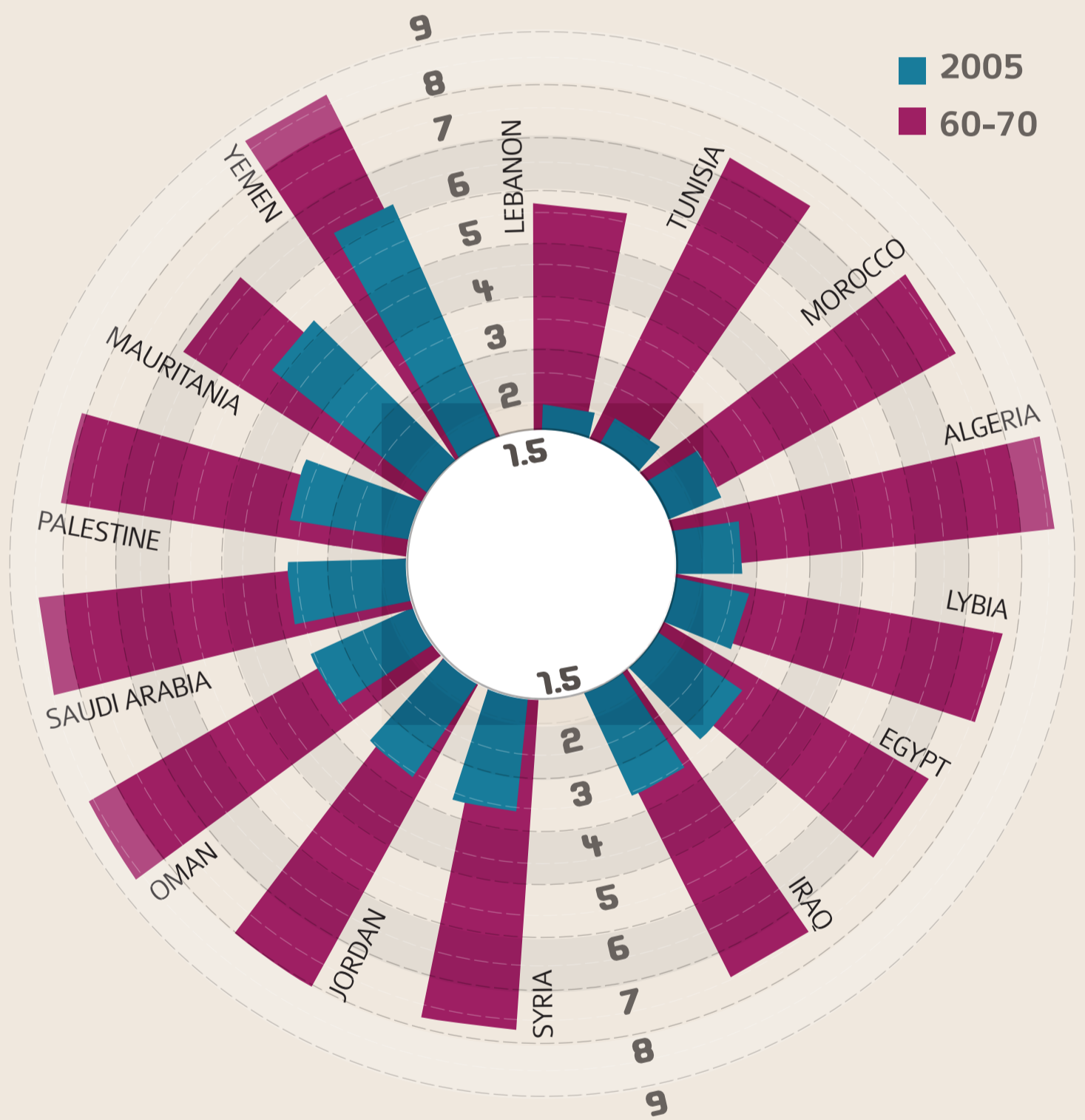
**FERTILITY RATES ARE NOT HOMOGENEOUS
ACROSS ISLAMIC COUNTRIES**

- **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**:



**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



Source: Youssef Courbage and Emmanuel Todd, *A Convergence of Civilisations - The Transformation of Muslim Societies Around the World*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2011.

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.

* 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'