



Europe's Stark Options

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Europe's long-term relations with its burgeoning Muslim minority, the continent's most critical issue, will follow one of three paths: harmonious integration, the expulsion of Muslims, or an Islamic takeover. Which of these scenarios will most likely play out?

Europe's future has vast importance not just for its residents. During a half-millennium, 1450-1950, this 7 percent of the world's landmass drove world history; its creativity and vigor invented modernity. The region may have already lost that critical position sixty years ago, but it remains vitally important in economic, political, and intellectual terms. Which direction it goes in, therefore, has huge implications for the rest of humanity, and especially for its daughter countries, such as

the United States, which historically have looked to Europe as a source of ideas, people, and goods.

Here is an assessment about the likelihood of each scenario.

I. Muslims Rule

The late [Oriana Fallaci](#) observed that, with the passage of time, "Europe becomes more and more a province of Islam, a colony of Islam." The historian [Bat Ye'or](#) has dubbed this colony "Eurabia." [Walter Laqueur](#) predicts in his forthcoming *Last Days of Europe* that Europe as we know it is bound to change. [Mark Steyn](#), in *America Alone: The End of the World as We Know It*, goes further and argues that much of the Western world "will not survive the twenty-first century, and much of it

will effectively disappear within our lifetimes, including many if not most European countries." Three factors - faith, demography, and a sense of heritage - argue for Europe being Islamized.

Faith: An extreme secularism predominates in Europe, especially among its elites, to the point that believing Christians (such as George W. Bush) are seen as mentally unbalanced and unfit for public office. In 2005, Rocco Buttiglione, a distinguished Italian politician and Catholic believer, was denied a position as Italy's European Union commissioner because of his views on such issues as homosexuality. Entrenched secularism also means empty churches: in London, researchers estimate, more Muslims attend mosques on Friday than do Christians churches on Sunday, although the city is home to roughly 7 times more born-Christians than born-Muslims. As Christianity fades, Islam beckons; [Prince Charles](#) exemplifies the fascination of many Europeans with Islam. Many conversions could be in Europe's future, for as the saying is ascribed to [G.K. Chesterton](#), "When men stop believing in God they don't believe in nothing; they believe in anything."

Europe's secularism shapes its discourse in ways quite unfamiliar to Americans. [Hugh Fitzgerald](#), formerly vice president of Jihad-Watch.org, illustrates one dimension of this difference:

The most memorable utterances of American presidents have almost always included recognizable Bibli-

cal phrases. ... This source of rhetorical strength was on display this past February [2003] when the Columbia shuttle blew up. Had it not been an American but a French shuttle that had blown up, and were Jacques Chirac having to give such a speech, he might well have used the fact that there were seven astronauts, and evoked an image of the Pleiades first named in pagan antiquity. The American President, at a solemn national ceremony that began and ended with Biblical Hebrew, did things differently. He took his text from Isaiah 40:26, which led to a seamless transition from mingled wonder and awe at the heavenly hosts brought forth by the Creator, to consolation for the earthly loss of the crew.

The buoyant faith of Muslims, with its attendant jihadi sensibility and Islamic supremacism, could not differ more from that of lapsed European Christians. This contrast leads many Muslims to see Europe as a continent ripe for conversion and domination. Outrageous supremacist claims result, such as the statement of Omar Bakri Mohammed, "I want Britain to become an Islamic state. I want to see the flag of Islam raised in 10 Downing Street." Or the prediction of a Belgium-based imam: "Soon we will take power in this country. Those who criticize us now, will regret it. They will have to serve us. Prepare, for the hour is near."[\[1\]](#)

Population: Demographic collapse also points to Europe being Islamized. The total fertility rate in Europe today averages about 1.4 per

woman, whereas sustaining one's population requires just over two children per couple, or 2.1 children per woman. The existing rate is just two-thirds of what it needs to be; one-third of the requisite population is simply not being born.

To avoid a severe diminution of population, with all the woes that implies - and specifically, an absence of workers to fund generous pension plans - Europe needs immigrants - lots of them. That imported third of the population tends to be Muslim, in part because Muslims are close by - it's only thirteen kilometers from Morocco to Spain, only a couple of hundred to Italy from Albania or Libya; in part because colonial ties continue to bind South Asia to Britain or the Maghrib to France; and in part because of the violence, tyranny, and poverty so prevalent in the Muslim world today, which prompts wave after wave of emigration.

Likewise, the high fertility of Muslims complements the paucity of children among indigenous Christians. Although the Muslim fertility rate is falling, it remains significantly higher than that of Europe's indigenous population. No doubt, the high birth rates have something to do with the premodern circumstances in which many Muslim women of Europe find themselves. In [Brussels](#), "Muhammad" has for some years been the most popular name given to infant boys, while Amsterdam and Rotterdam are on track to be, by about 2015, the first major European cities with majority Muslim populations. The French

analyst Michel Gurfinkiel estimates an ethnic street war in France would find the children of *indigènes* and of immigrants in a roughly one-to-one ratio. Current predictions see a Muslim majority in Russia's army by 2015 and in the country as a whole by about 2050.

Sense of heritage: What often is depicted as Europe's political correctness reflects what I believe is a deeper phenomenon, namely, the alienation of many Europeans from their civilization, a sense that their historic culture is not worth fighting for or even saving. It's striking to note differences within Europe in this regard. Perhaps the country least prone to this alienation is France, where traditional nationalism still holds sway and the French take pride in their identity. Britain is the most alienated country, as symbolized by the plaintive government program, "[ICONS - A Portrait of England](#)," that lamely hopes to rekindle patriotism by connecting Britons to their "national treasures," such as Winnie-the-Pooh and the miniskirt.

This diffidence has had direct and adverse implications for Muslim immigrants, as [Aatish Taseer](#) explained in *Prospect* magazine.

Britishness is the most nominal aspect of identity to many young British Pakistanis. ... If you denigrate your own culture you face the risk of your newer arrivals looking for one elsewhere. So far afield in this case, that for many second-generation British Pakistanis, the desert culture of the Arabs held mo-

re appeal than either British or sub-continental culture. Three times removed from a durable sense of identity, the energised extra-national worldview of radical Islam became one available identity for second-generation Pakistanis.

Immigrant Muslims widely disdain Western civilization, and especially its sexuality (pornography, divorce, homosexuality). Nowhere in Europe are Muslims being assimilated, rarely does intermarriage take place. Here is one colorful example, from Canada: The mother of the notorious [Khadr brood](#), known as the country's first family of terrorism, returned to Canada from Afghanistan and Pakistan in April 2004 with one of her sons. Despite her seeking refuge in Canada, she publicly insisted just a month earlier that Al-Qaeda-sponsored training camps were the best place for her children. "Would you like me to raise my child in Canada to be, by the time he's 12 or 13 years old, to be on drugs or having some homosexual relationship? Is it better?"

(Ironically, in centuries past, as the historian [Norman Daniel](#) has documented, Christian Europeans looked down at Muslims with their multiple wives and harems as overly-sexualized, and therefore felt morally superior.)

To sum up: this first argument holds that Europe will be Islamized, quietly submitting to the *dhimmi* status or converting to Islam, because the yin of Europe and yang of Muslims fit so well: low and high religiosity, low and high fertility, low and high

cultural confidence.^[2] Europe is an open door through which Muslims are walking.

II. Muslims Rejected

Or will the door be shut in their face? American columnist [Ralph Peters](#) dismisses the first scenario: "Far from enjoying the prospect of taking over Europe by having babies, Europe's Muslims are living on borrowed time. ... predictions of a Muslim takeover of Europe ... ignore history and Europe's ineradicable viciousness." Instead, depicting Europe as the place "that perfected genocide and ethnic cleansing," he predicts its Muslims "will be lucky just to be deported," and not killed. [Claire Berlinski](#), in *Menace in Europe: Why the Continent's Crisis Is America's, Too*, implicitly agrees, pointing to the "ancient conflicts and patterns ... now shambling out of the mists of European history" which could well trigger violence.

This scenario has indigenous Europeans - who do still constitute 95 percent of the continent's population - waking up one day and asserting themselves. "*Basta!*" they will say, and reclaim their historic order. This is not so remote; a chafing among Europeans, less among elites than the masses, loudly protests changes already underway. Illustrations of that resentment include the anti-*hijab* legislation in France, irritation over the restrictions of national flags and Christian symbols, and the insistence on [serving wine at state dinners](#). A movement spontaneously developed in several French cities in early 2006 to [serve pork](#)

[soup](#) to the poor, thus intentionally excluding Muslims.

These are minor issues, to be sure, but insurgent anti-immigrant parties have already emerged in many countries and are beginning to demand not just effective control of borders but the expulsion of illegal immigrants. A nativist movement throughout Europe is forming largely unnoticed beneath our eyes. However meager its record so far, it has huge potential. Parties opposed to immigration and Islam generally have neo-fascist backgrounds but are growing more respectable over time, shedding their antisemitic origins and their dubious economic theories, focusing instead on the questions of faith, demography, and identity, and learning about Islam and Muslims. The [British National Party](#) and Belgium's Vlaamse Belang offer two examples of such a move toward respectability, which may one day be followed by electability. The presidential race in France in 2002 came down to a contest between Jacques Chirac and the neo-fascist Jean-Marie Le Pen.

Other parties have already tasted power. Jörg Haider and the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs were briefly in office. The Lega Nord in Italy was for years part of the ruling coalition. They will likely grow stronger because their anti-Islamist and often anti-Islamic messages resonate, and mainstream parties will partially adopt their messages. (Denmark's Conservative Party offers a model; after 72 years in the wilderness, it returned to power in 2001 due basically to anger concern-

ing immigration.) These parties will likely benefit when immigration to Europe surges uncontrollably to ever-higher levels, including perhaps a [mass exodus from Africa](#), as many indications suggest will happen.

Once in power, nationalist parties will reject multiculturalism and try to re-establish traditional values and mores. One can only speculate about their means and about the Muslim reaction. Peters dwells on the fascistic and violent aspects of some groups and expects an anti-Muslim backlash to take ominous forms. He even sketches a scenario in which "U.S. Navy ships are at anchor and U.S. Marines have gone ashore at Brest, Bremerhaven or Bari to guarantee the safe evacuation of Europe's Muslims."

For years, Muslims have worried about just such incarceration and brutalization, followed by expulsion or even massacres. Already in the late 1980s, the late Kalim Siddiqui, director of London's Muslim Institute, raised the specter of "Hitler-style gas chambers for Muslims." Shabbir Akhtar warned in his 1989 book, [Be Careful With Muhammad](#) that "the next time there are gas chambers in Europe, there is no doubt concerning who'll be inside them," meaning Muslims. A character in Hanif Kureishi's 1991 novel, [The Buddha of Suburbia](#), prepares the guerilla war that he expects will follow after "the whites finally turned on the blacks and Asians and tried to force us into gas chambers."

But it is more likely that European efforts at reclamation will be initiated peaceably and legally, with Muslims – in keeping with recent patterns of intimidation and terrorism – being the ones to initiate violence. Multiple polls confirm that about 5 percent of [British Muslims](#) endorse the 7/7 bombings, suggesting a general readiness to resort to force.

However it happens, a European reassertion cannot be assumed to take place cooperatively.

III. Muslims Integrated

In the happiest scenario, autochthonous Europeans and Muslim immigrants find a *modus vivendi* and live together harmoniously. Perhaps the classic statement of this optimistic expectation was a 1991 study, *La France, une chance pour l'Islam* ("France, an Opportunity for Islam") by [Jeanne-Hélène and Pierre Patrick Kaltenbach](#). "For the first time in history," they wrote, "Islam is offered the chance to waken in a democratic, rich, laic, and peaceable country." That hopefulness lives on. An [Economist](#) leader from mid-2006 asserts that "for the moment at least, the prospect of Eurabia looks like scaremongering." Also at that time, [Jocelyne Cesari](#), associate professor of Islamic studies at the Harvard Divinity School, claimed a balance exists: just as "Islam is changing Europe," she said, "Europe is changing Islam." She finds that "Muslims in Europe do not want to change the nature of European states" and expects them to adapt themselves into the European context.

Such optimism, unfortunately, has little foundation. Europeans could yet rediscover their Christian faith, have more babies, and cherish their own heritage. They could encourage non-Muslim immigration or acculturate the Muslims already among them. But such changes are not now underway, nor are their prospects good. Instead, Muslims are cultivating grievances and ambitions at odds with their indigenous neighbors. Worryingly, each generation appears more alienated than its predecessor. Canadian novelist Hugh MacLennan dubbed his country's English-French split the "[Two Solitudes](#)"; one sees something similar, but far more pronounced, developing in Europe. Those polls of British Muslims for example, find that a majority of them perceive a conflict between their British and Muslim identities and want Islamic law instituted.

The possibility of Muslims accepting the confines of historic Europe and smoothly integrating within it can virtually be dismissed from consideration. Even [Bassam Tibi](#), professor at the University of Göttingen, who has often warned that "Either Islam gets Europeanized, or Europe gets Islamized," has personally given up on the continent. Recently, he announced that he is leaving Germany after 44 years' residence there, to [move](#) to Cornell University in the United States.

Conclusion

As the American columnist [Dennis Prager](#) sums them up, "It is difficult to imagine any other future scenario for Western Europe than its becom-

ing Islamicized or having a civil war." Indeed, these two deeply unattractive alternative paths appear to define Europe's choices, with powerful forces pulling in the contrary directions of Muslims taking over or Muslims rejected, Europe an extension of North Africa or in a state of quasi-civil war.

Which will it be? The decisive events that will resolve this question have yet to take place, so one cannot yet make the call. Decision-time is fast approaching, however. Within the next decade or so, today's flux will end, the Europe-Islam equation will harden, and the continent's fu-

ture course should become apparent.

Correctly anticipating that course is the more difficult for being historically unprecedented. No large territory has ever shifted from one civilization to another by virtue of a collapsed population, faith, and identity; nor has a people risen on so grand a scale to reclaim its patrimony. The novelty and magnitude of Europe's predicament make it difficult to understand, tempting to overlook, and nearly impossible to predict. Europe marches us all into terra incognita.

Notes:

[1] *De Morgen*, Oct. 5, 1994. Cited in Koenraad Elst, "The Rushdie Rules", *Middle East Quarterly*, June 1998.

[2] It's striking to note that in these three ways, Europe and the United States were much more similar 25 years ago than today. This suggests that their bifurcation results less from historical patterns going back centuries and more from developments in the 1960s. However deeply that decade affected the United States, it had a far deeper impact on Europe.