

STUMBLING TOWARD EURABIA

Alex Alexiev

In the summer of 2004, in an interview little noticed outside the country, the prominent academic scholar of Islam Bassam Tibi predicted a future for Germany that many decried as provocative nonsense at the time.¹ In ten years, Tibi said, Germany will be the scene of large running battles between police and gangs of marginalized Muslim youth, bringing cities like Berlin, Cologne and Frankfurt to the brink of chaos. This will be the inevitable result, according to him, of a trend that is already visible. Muslims are not interested in integration. They are, in fact, obligated not to integrate by the radical Islamic ideology dominant in their communities, and live increasingly segregated in parallel societies. The main difference between 2004 and 2014, Tibi believed, would be that the highly marginalized Muslim population would have more than doubled to 10 million, *sharia* would have been gradually introduced in Germany and the Islam preached there would be even more radical and resemble Nazi totalitarianism.

Today, more than three and a half years later, a new study of attitudes among young Muslims by the German interior ministry would seem to confirm Tibi's fears. According to the survey, 44 percent of respondents have fundamentalist Islamic beliefs, 50 percent believe that "Muslims who die in the armed struggle for the faith (Jihad) go to paradise," and one in four is ready to engage in violence against non-Muslims.²



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Nor is such troubling evidence unique to Germany. At about the time the German study was being released, the Bishop of Rochester, Michael Nazir-Ali, spoke of the existence of Muslim no-go zones in Britain, described as areas dominated by radical Islamic ideology where people of different faiths reportedly face physical attacks. This phenomenon has been likened by Tory shadow Home Secretary David Davis to “voluntary apartheid” by Muslims, “shutting themselves in closed society, demanding immunity from criticism.”³ And just a month earlier, in the Paris suburb of Villiers-le-Bel, young Muslim rioters for the first time used firearms and Molotov cocktails to battle police in what was described by some in the media as an “urban guerilla war.”⁴

Are these troubling developments part of an inexorable slide toward the Islamization of Europe that will make Tibi’s dire predictions reality? Or are they, as many have argued, the predictable result of the long-term socio-economic neglect, racism and discrimination against Europe’s Muslims that could be easily fixed with the proper policies? The answer to this question is of existential importance for the future of Europe, the Atlantic Alliance and, indeed, Western civilization itself.

The demographics of twilight

The crisis now engulfing Europe is euphemistically referred to in scholarly papers as the “second demographic transition.” What this innocuous term conceals is a phenomenon unprecedented in human history, namely the implicit refusal of large societies in times of peace to produce babies in numbers sufficient to guarantee their long-term survival.

While this trend seems to characterize the entire developed industrial world to one extent or another, it is especially pronounced in Europe, where it has become a continent-wide phenomenon.⁵ Stated simply, European birth rates (known as “total fertility rate,” or TFR) have collapsed to approximately 1.5 children per woman in 1995 from nearly twice that rate three decades earlier.⁶ What this means, in practical terms, is that a sustained fertility rate of 1.5 in a society leads to the yearly loss of one-half percent of its population.⁷ The cataclysmic long-term repercussions of such a development in Europe may be too far in the future to worry us here, but there are immediate and medium-term consequences to this phenomenon that should be of grave concern.

With a fertility rate of just under 1.5 percent for the past ten years, and no realistic prospect of any improvement in the foreseeable future, Europe has an annual deficit of over two million births to reach replacement levels. To the extent that the continent’s population is increasing at all, it is mostly on account of legal and illegal immigration. As the smaller post-baby boom cohorts reach childbearing age, this deficit will widen still further, contracting the native European population by anywhere between 100 and 150 million—or a quarter to a third of today’s EU-25 450 million—by mid-century.⁸ This historically unprecedented population implosion will shrink Europe’s share of the world population to barely four percent in 2050 from 12 percent in 1950.

Unfortunately, the dire implications of this trend will not wait until mid-century to manifest themselves, but will start wreaking havoc with Europe’s socio-economic prospects in

the immediate future. This is because, long before significant depopulation begins to take place, low fertility ushers in a pervasive ageing process that ultimately renders the expensive but unfunded pay-as-you-go welfare systems of modern western societies unsustainable. Demographers refer to this key dependency as the “potential support ratio” (PSR), usually expressed in the ratio of individuals of working age (15-64) to the number of people of retirement age (65 and over) in a given society.⁹ A more accurate measure is the actual number of working individuals available to support each retired or disabled individual through their taxes.

Until the late decades of the 20th century, these ratios were traditionally very high even in western societies, where the average age of the population remained under 30. But this is changing dramatically. By 2010, the number of elders (65 and over) in France and most other EU countries will outnumber people aged 0 to 14—a development that has never happened before in recorded history. By 2015, the 60-and-over cohort will represent more than a quarter of the population, and a decade or so later it will become twice as large as the group aged 0 to 24.¹⁰ It is beyond question that with a projected nominal PSR of between 1.5 and 2 in 2030 and even earlier none of the EU countries would be able to sustain levels of prosperity anywhere near the ones they enjoy today unless their welfare systems are drastically reformed or dismantled.

Other less obvious but no less serious economic consequences of this trend will also begin affecting growth and prosperity in short order. Rapidly shrinking and ageing populations inevitably lead to decreasing demand for everything except healthcare and government services.

Ageing societies thus place inordinate burdens on the public purse, while limiting consumption in the marketplace and negatively affecting the cost of labor, productivity, international competitiveness, innovation and foreign and domestic investment. Ultimately, if and when such societies are perceived as moribund, as they inevitably will be, one can expect massive out-migration of capital, companies and skilled individuals to more attractive locales. It is unlikely that this process will run its course without major political upheavals, because the logic of ageing welfare societies requires ever greater transfers of wealth from the depleted younger and poorer cohorts to the more affluent and electorally powerful “geezer” generations.

In the past half century or so the Muslim population in Western Europe has exploded from less than a quarter million in the early 1950s to between 15 and 20 million today. And it is a rapidly growing population that has also become progressively radicalized.

There are, of course, a number of options Europeans have for mitigating negative demographic trends before the population implosion begins in earnest around 2020. All, however, involve considerable pain and attitudinal change that could doom them politically. To keep the potential support ratio from declining, Europeans could, for instance, raise the *de facto* retirement age from the current 58 years to 65 or 66, and/or increase the percentage

of the working population in the EU from its current level of 62 percent to the one prevailing, for instance, in Denmark (75 percent). That alone would add 32 million people to the workforce.¹¹ More drastic still (and therefore even less likely) would be deep cuts in welfare and pension benefits and the privatization of pay-as-you-go pension plans.

Apart from these short-term palliatives, there are only two possible long-term solutions that could theoretically prevent the dire consequences of the demographic crisis discussed above from becoming a reality—increasing the birth rate and immigration. And neither one is a likely panacea.

On the first point, there is a near-unanimity among demographers that raising European birth rates to the replacement value of 2.1 children per woman is virtually impossible in the short to medium term (10-20 years), and problematic even in the longer term. Moreover, even if replacement levels were to be achieved 30 years or more in the future, most of the negative demographic and socio-economic developments projected for 2050 will have taken place regardless.

This leaves immigration, and here again the picture is troubling. The official policy of virtually all EU governments is to discourage immigration from outside the EU except for highly skilled professionals and a few other categories, such as family reunification and political asylum. Despite these restrictions, significant legal and illegal immigration, estimated at over two million per annum, does take place and is the main reason Europe's population has not yet started declining. Unfortunately, it has not contributed to the amelioration of the continent's demographic

and economic crises; rather, it is actually making things worse.

The problem with current immigration into the EU is very simply the fact that much of it places additional burdens on the social welfare system rather than contributing to its improvement. This is the case, as will be explained in greater detail below, because most of the new arrivals enter Europe either as part of the "migration chain," i.e., family reunification, "mail-order spouses," etc., or as illegal aliens. The vast majority in both categories lack job and linguistic skills and do not join the tax-paying labor force in any significant numbers, but rather work in the underground economy or enlist in the welfare rolls.

While studies have shown clearly that present immigrant populations to the EU from poor countries impose a net cost on their host societies, there is growing evidence that failed immigration and integration policies may present an even bigger political challenge. The most serious issue here by far is the extensive and ongoing radicalization of the burgeoning Muslim populations throughout the European Union.

The Muslim population explosion

Establishing even the basic facts about Europe's Muslim populations is often an arduous task because most European governments, with the notable exception of Britain, seemingly as a matter of principle, avoid collecting or publishing most relevant data of an ethnic or religious character. Nonetheless, using a variety of sources, it is possible to establish credible approximations of both the absolute numbers and fertility rates of Europe's Muslims.

What is beyond dispute is that in the past half a century or so the Muslim population in Western Europe has exploded from less than a quarter million in the early 1950s to between 15 and 20 million today. While that still represents only four to five percent of the EU-15 (370 million) population or three to four percent of the EU-25 (450 million), it is a rapidly growing population that has also become progressively radicalized.

Most EU governments have avoided openly debating this issue, except for rhetorical flourishes about the need to integrate the Muslim minority, and have focused instead on its implications for terrorism. Demographers and other experts, on the other hand, have conjured up the “Islamization” of Europe in the long term or, conversely, the possibility that Muslim birth rates will fall in line with the native ones over time and bring about a stable balance. Relatively little attention has been paid to the likelihood that the burgeoning Muslim communities, if radicalized and unintegrated, could have a dramatic impact on political stability in Western Europe long before “Islamization” takes place.

To understand the potential for such an outcome, it is important to first come to terms with some of the essential characteristics of the demographic momentum and the nature of the ongoing radicalization process of European Muslims.

Perhaps the first thing that needs to be pointed out is that discussions of whether or not Muslims will become the majority of the population in Europe by the end of the 21st century are largely academic. However, the possibility that radicalized Muslims who reject the European secular democratic order could become a dominant demographic

factor among key age cohorts in 20 years or so is of huge political consequence. And despite the lack of definitive data, there are compelling reasons to believe that this could indeed happen.

As already mentioned, most European governments provide statistics on neither Muslim fertility rates nor total populations. Nonetheless, available data, however incomplete, shows beyond much doubt that 1) Muslims are dramatically younger as a group, 2) have fertility rates that are two or even three times higher than those of native Europeans, and 3) are growing fast on account of legal and illegal immigration.

Official British statistics from the 2001 UK census show, for instance, that 34 percent of the estimated Muslim population of 1.6 million was under 16 years of age, compared to approximately 20 percent of Christians, and over 70 percent of the former were under 34 years old, as compared to 40 percent of the latter. Less than five percent of Muslims were aged 65 and over, compared to 20 percent for Christians.¹² Overall, in 2001 survey, the average age for Muslims in the United Kingdom was under 27 years, while that of the white population was 38 (and projected to be 40 by 2007).¹³ The same or worse ratio is likely to obtain in most of the other large EU members, such as Germany, Italy and Spain, all of which have lower birthrates than Britain.

The youthful and more fecund Muslim population, coupled with a tradition of getting married young, accounts for dramatically higher growth rates.¹⁴ Though actual TFR numbers are not published, it is a fair assumption that they are high, probably between 2.5 and 3. This could be deduced both from the available

growth numbers for Muslims in some British towns and by the size of the average Muslim household, which was reported to be 4.9 in 1991.¹⁵ Very similar fertility rates are reported in France, where according to figures for 1999 provided by the French statistical agency, INSEE, the main Muslim national groups had birth rates as follows: Algerians—2.57, Moroccans—2.97, Tunisians—2.90, and Turks—3.21.¹⁶

Overall, the probable European Muslim TFR of between 2.5 and 3.0 will result in a natural increase of the Muslim population of approximately 1.5 to 2 percent per annum. This corresponds to between 225,000 and 300,000 if the lower figure of 15 million is used, and between 300,000 and 400,000 if the higher 20 million figure is applied. This compares to the EU average TFR of 1.5, which, as mentioned, leads to a loss of two and a quarter million people per year throughout the continent.

The Old Continent is no longer just a transit point for terrorists; it has itself become a breeding ground for all manner of Islamic extremists and jihadists.

The second factor contributing to non-native population increase in Europe has traditionally been legal immigration. There have been two waves of post-World War II large-scale Muslim influx into Europe: “post-colonial” and “guest worker” immigration. The first involved the former citizens of the colonial possessions of Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, etc., who qualified for immigration. This is how large numbers of people from Pakistan, Bangla-

desh, India, Algeria, Indonesia and elsewhere settled in Europe in the aftermath of decolonization. Then, as European economies recovered from war devastation, millions of “guest workers” were recruited as cheap labor for the booming economies of Western Europe in the 1950s and beyond. These two waves of immigration set the stage for today’s large Muslim diaspora communities.

Large-scale legal immigration was essentially terminated in most of Western Europe after the 1973 oil embargo and the resulting economic crisis, but it was replaced over time by a different form of legal immigration which is much more difficult to control and which has been widely used and abused by Muslims to gain entry into Europe.

Demographers have coined a special term for this phenomenon: “chain migration.” It was first instituted in most Western European countries as a humanitarian family reunification measure for the mostly single immigrants of the initial waves. In the meantime, as immigration for economic reasons has fallen off drastically, chain migration has become the most important method of gaining legal entry into the EU. The most commonly used approach is arranged or forced marriages, where European-born individuals are married off to partners back in the home country. Not only is the new bride/bridegroom allowed to join his/her spouse in Europe, but very often the entire family follows shortly, resulting in multiple new immigrants.

And, with the exception of Hindus and Sikhs, the vast majority of arranged marriages are practiced by Muslims. One German source estimates, for instance, that up to 80 percent of Muslim girls in a Hamburg Turkish community enter into

enforced marriage,¹⁷ while in the United Kingdom 67 percent of girls between the age of 16 and 34 are reported to have their marriages arranged by their parents. Overall, various studies have shown that a clear majority of new immigrants from outside of Europe now arrive through family reunification. In the United Kingdom, which accounts for some 10 percent of the total EU Muslim population, for example, there were close to 50,000 new arrivals via spousal migration in 2001, most of whom were Muslims.¹⁸ Muslim chain migration in all of the EU thus could be as high as half a million per annum, a figure that exceeds the natural population increase.

Arranged or forced marriages have yet another important effect in that they act as a major barrier to assimilation in European society. As political philosopher Francis Fukuyama has argued, and as the American immigration experience confirms, rates of marriage outside of one's group "correlate strongly with both assimilation and upward mobility."¹⁹ By controlling and limiting their children's marriage choices, Muslim parents in Europe effectively undermine their chances for integration and economic betterment, at a significant cost to society.

The final quasi-legal immigration category that contributes significantly to the growth of EU's Muslim populations is political asylum. Granting political asylum to individuals persecuted in their native lands for the political views they hold is, of course, a noble and time-honored tradition in civilized nations. Unfortunately, European societies have allowed the right to asylum to be widely abused by millions that have no legitimate claim to it and use it simply as another convenient way of getting in.

Finally, the Muslim populations in Europe are augmented by large-scale illegal immigration, which may be the most important quantitative factor presently. Exact figures are not available, but various sources allow a credible estimate of both the overall number of illegal immigrants residing in Europe and the yearly flows. There is, for example, considerable evidence that the unauthorized immigrant population in southern Europe (Portugal, Spain, France, Italy and Greece) alone exceeds the three million mark. Italy, France and Portugal have at least another million and a half immigrants between them. Northern Europe with Germany, Great Britain and a few others with significant Muslim populations almost certainly host another three million or so. And, given the very large size of this illegal immigrant contingent, it is reasonable to conclude that the half a million new arrivals per year estimated by EU authorities is unrealistically low. Rather, judging by the number of illegals apprehended by border controls in various European countries, the actual influx is at least twice as large.

Unlike political asylum, which is mostly a Muslim affair, illegal immigration to Europe attracts people from every corner of the world, from China to Latin America to sub-Saharan Africa. Nonetheless, after the drying up of Eastern Europe as a major source of undocumented immigrants to the EU in the past few years, Muslims now make up a clear majority of the yearly influx of over a million.

All in all, natural increase, chain migration, asylum seekers and illegal immigration put together easily contribute over a million to the growth of the EU Muslim population every year, and that is probably a very conservative estimate. The Muslim

population is thus set to increase by at least 50 percent every decade, and will likely double from its current level by 2020—and double again by 2035. By that year (and possibly earlier), the majority of young people in most large European urban centers will be Muslims.

Major demographic shifts are, of course, nothing new in history. Nor is the replacement of one dominant culture with another on account of a new demographic balance necessarily a cause for concern *per se*. Unless, of course, that new culture is dominated by the hateful, obscurantist and inherently violent Islamist creed that does not intend to coexist peacefully with others.

Radical Islam resurgent

As with any complex socio-political phenomenon, the radicalization of European Muslims has been the result of a combination of political, economic and social factors and policies. The stage was probably first set by the stubborn, if totally unrealistic, belief of European governments that the millions of Muslim “guest workers” they imported as cheap labor were indeed guests, and were sooner or later going to go home voluntarily. Thus, for many years, no European government entertained the possibility of long-term settlement for the immigrants, nor took even elementary acculturation and assimilation measures.

That neglect, coupled with European xenophobia and latent racism, restricted the immigrants’ housing options to dilapidated industrial areas or public housing in large cities and preordained the emergence of Muslim ghettos. The ghettoization of the Muslim immigrants and their progressive isolation from mainstream European society received another

major impetus from the multi-cultural dogmas that became the order of the day in Western Europe in the 1980s and beyond. The “temporary” guest workers were thus encouraged to maintain their separate ethnic, linguistic and cultural identities and organize separate sports and cultural institutions, and even alternative labor union and political organizations.

No government policy, however, has had a greater and more negative effect on those immigrants than the “social market” policies that became the norm in the EU. As the post-1973 oil crisis put an official end to the “economic miracle” post-war era in Europe, the welfare state policies began to impose ever greater burdens on the economy in terms of government intervention, rising payroll taxes and minimum wages and rigid labor laws designed to protect highly paid and pampered skilled and unionized workers and punish the young and unskilled by making them unemployable. At the same time, generous welfare checks, housing benefits, child subsidies and free health care made it economically more attractive for many to do nothing rather than do minimum wage jobs. Inevitably, this state of affairs bred resentment, alienation and lawlessness. And as it did, those with a distinct non-European culture, like the Muslims, progressively decoupled physically and emotionally from the larger society around them. It is in these alienated Muslim enclaves throughout Europe that radical Islam found fertile soil for its siren call.

This process of encapsulation, which began in earnest with the second generation of Muslim immigrants in the 1970s, coincided with the coming of age of radical Islam in the Middle East and South Asia. The next three decades saw the massive

infiltration of radical Islamic influence into Europe, spurred by an influx of foreign radicals from groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood and massive amounts of Saudi money.²⁰ This alliance facilitated the takeover of British Muslim organizations, and helped erect a huge network of Wahhabi-controlled institutions, including over 1,500 mosques, 150 Islamic Centers, 202 Muslim colleges and 2,000 Islamic schools.²¹ As a result, there is hardly a city of any size in the West that does not have a Saudi-controlled institution preaching extremism and spewing hatred against Western civilization and, directly or indirectly, advocating its destruction. And in Europe's increasingly isolated, impoverished and discontented Muslims, the Wahhabi message has increasingly found resonance. The end result is by now painfully clear: a pervasive radicalization of European Muslims is taking place throughout Western Europe.

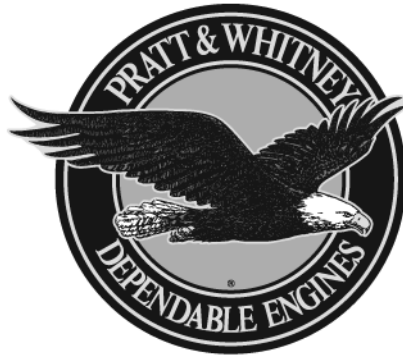
The immediate repercussions of this troubling phenomenon are already visible. The Old Continent is no longer just a transit point for terrorists; it has itself become a breeding ground for all manner of Islamic extremists and jihadists. With hundreds of European-born and -raised extremists documented to have already taken part in terrorist activities in all the hotbeds of jihadism worldwide, this is and should be a matter of serious concern. But the more profound challenge posed by the quasi-totalitarian Islamist ideology now on the march within the EU is to Europe itself. For, if the kind of radical, uncompromising and violence-prone worldview currently on display in Muslim ghettos remains dominant among European Muslims as they become a majority of the Continent's young, urban population,

it is difficult to see how Europe can remain a modern democratic and secular polity.



1. Astrid Maier, "Deutschland 2014: Muslimische 'No-Future Kids' Werden Sich an Deutschland Raehen," *Financial Times Deutschland*, August 13, 2004.
2. "Junge Muslime Neigen Zur Gewalt," *Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung* (Hannover), December 12, 2007.
3. "Bishop Warns of No-Go Zones for Non-Muslims," *Sunday Telegraph* (London), January 7, 2008.
4. See, for example, "Police Say Paris Rioters Are Armed as Clashes Escalate," *Guardian* (London), November 28, 2007.
5. For a concise and insightful overview of recent demographic trends worldwide see Nicholas Eberstadt, "Four Surprises in Global Demography," *Foreign Policy Research Institute Watch on the West* vol. 5, no. 5, July 2004, www.fpri.org/www/0505.200407.eberstadt_demography.html.
6. European Commission, *Eurostat Yearbook 2004: The Statistical Guide to Europe* (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2004), 48, http://www.oeaw.ac.at/vid/download/fuernkranz/eurostat_yearbook_2004.pdf.
7. This is exactly what has been happening in Russia for several years. With a population of 143 million (20 to 25 percent of which is Muslim) and a fertility rate of 1.3, that country has been losing 700,000 people per year on average.
8. European losses are likely to be considerably higher if one were to include Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, which are projected to lose 30, 36 and 25 percent of their populations, respectively, for a total of over 60 million. See United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "UN World Population Prospects," n.d., <http://esa.un.org/unpp/>.
9. This number could be misleading however, at least as it applies to Europe, because most Europeans currently enter the labor force not at 15 but after 20 and retire not at the *de jure* retirement age of 65, but at a *de facto* retirement age of 58.
10. Jean-Claude Chesnais, "The Inversion of the Age Pyramid and the Future Population Decline in France: Implications and Policy Responses," Expert Group Meeting on Policy Responses to Population Ageing and Population Decline, United Nations

- Secretariat, New York, October 16-18, 2000, <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/popdecline/Chesnais.pdf>.
11. D.A.Coleman, "Facing the 21st Century: New Developments, Continuing Problems," Paper presented at the European Population Forum, Geneva, Switzerland, January 12-14, 2004.
 12. See National Statistics Online, "Age and Sex Distribution: Muslim Population Is Youngest," n.d., <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=955>. The 2001 census was the first British census which contained a question about religion, though answering it was not mandatory in England and Wales, which in the view of some may have skewed the response.
 13. See National Statistics Online, "Age/Sex Distribution: Non-White Groups Are Younger," n.d., <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=456>.
 14. According to the 2001 census, Muslims are five times more likely to be married by the age of 24 than whites.
 15. Table 8.3 in M. Murphy, *Ethnicity in the 1991 Census*, Vol. 1 (London: HMSO, 1996).
 16. Cited in Laurent Toulemon, "La Fecondite des Immigrees: Nouvelles Donnees, Nouvelle Approche," *Population & Societes* no. 400, April 2004.
 17. A. Desselberger et al., "Integrationskrise: Vertraut und Fremd," *Focus* (Munich), November 22, 2004.
 18. Data from the UK Home Office, as cited in Coleman, op. cit.
 19. Francis Fukuyama, "Our Foreign Legions," *Wall Street Journal*, January 26, 2004.
 20. According to official Saudi figures, between 1973 and 2002, the kingdom spent more than \$80 billion to promote Islamic activities in the non-Muslim world alone. See "Saudi Aid to Developing World," saudiinf.com, n.d., <http://www.saudiinf.com/main/1102.htm>, and "Saudi Aid to Developing Nations Exceeds SR281 Billion," Saudi Press Agency (Riyadh), January 2, 2003, www.saudia-online.com/news2003/newsjan03/news2.shtml.
 21. Cited in *Ain al-Yaqeen* (Riyadh), March 2, 2002.



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