



Eurabia - Europe's Future?

**A briefing by Bat Ye'or
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Bat Ye'or, a historian, has published groundbreaking works on minorities and "dhimmitude" (their inferior status) under Islam, including *Islam and Dhimmitude: Where Civilizations Collide* (2002). Her latest book, *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis* (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2005), argues that European governments, especially the French, have developed foreign policies aimed at winning the favor of Middle Eastern regimes and appeasing the growing militant Islamic minorities in their midst. Bat Ye'or addressed the Middle East Forum in New York on February 7, 2005.

Europe is undergoing two profound changes. The first is the weakening of Christianity. The second is demographic decline. Presently, across Europe, there are only two-thirds the number of children born necessary to sustain the population. The consequent drop in population has mostly been made good by immigration of Muslims. The fast-growing Muslim population is generally not integrated into the host societies nor politically acculturated to its norms. To the contrary, radical Islamic movements are gaining in strength among these émigré populations. In addition, European governments, especially the French, have developed foreign policies aimed at winning the favor of Middle Eastern regimes.

The question arises: is this a temporary aberration or is Europe on the road to losing its historic identity? The latter: Europe is rapidly being transformed into "Eurabia," a cultural and political appendage of the Arab/Muslim world that is fundamentally anti-Christian, anti-Semitic, anti-Western and anti-American.

European-Arab Partnership

The four-decade political and economic relationship between Europe and the Arab countries of the Middle East, institutionalized in the annual European-Arab Dialogue, has spawned a virulent and hostile amalgam called "Eurabia." It will not simply go away with a change in European Union (EU) policy. Rather, its roots are deeper. Indeed, how the Eurabia issue is handled today will largely determine Europe's future.

The images of Eurabia are manifest in millions of people burning American and Israeli flags during the Iraq war and openly supporting Yasir Arafat, Saddam Hussein, and other brutal dictators. Eurabia is also discernible in the explosion of anti-Semitic activity and a lack of empathy for Jewish rights in various European countries. Increasingly, Jews find themselves under attack, chiefly from Muslim extremists and radicalized youth, and European governments and law enforcement agencies react to these violations of rights only tepidly and only after the sustained pressure of publicity. The Eurabian phenomenon can also be seen in the intimidation into silence of critiques of Islam and Muslim society, epitomized by the slaying in broad daylight of Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh, who had made a documentary on the travails experienced by Muslim women within Muslim societies.

Eurabia in the Making

This pernicious merger began with Charles De Gaulle in the 1960s. De Gaulle saw that the power of France diminished with the loss of its colonies and he believed a more unified Europe would restore some French glory. In order to unify Europe, the continent needed to form an international bloc that could rival America. The Arab nations of the Middle East, unparalleled in their oil wealth, seemed to be good partners. Laying the foundation for this relationship, on November 27, 1967, De Gaulle said that French-Arab collaboration would be a fundamental element in French politics.

Since then, France has adopted a highly amiable policy toward the Arab world and a hostile attitude toward Israel.

After the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the Arab states proclaimed their oil boycott against Europe and specifically against countries with close ties to Israel. Only twenty days after the start of the war, the European community of nine countries recognized the rights of the Palestinians to participate in political negotiations and demanded Israel's return to the armistice lines of 1949, thus diverging from UN Security Council Resolution 242, passed in 1967 and still the basis of a negotiated settlement.

Consequently, the Arab boycott of Europe came to an end; and the French and German governments requested Arab leaders to enter into an official dialogue with European leaders to cement a solid relationship. The Arab leaders agreed but on condition that the Europeans had a unified foreign policy in synchrony with the interests of the Arab states.

Elements of this relationship are plenty evident. For example, European leaders see Arab reform running parallel to the resolution of the Israeli-Arab peace process. Again and again, Arab and European leaders exploit impasses in the Arab-Israeli conflict conveniently to delay democratic reforms.

The goal of Eurabia is to bring together the two shores of the Mediterranean with the interests of European society mirroring the interests of the Arab world. There should be a homogenization of culture, politics, and policy between the two shores. As a byproduct, American leaders have to deal with the growing Eurabian political culture instead of the former European body politic.

Unfortunately, most Europeans are not aware of the Eurabia merger. The new hatred found in Europe against America and Israel is commonplace and intertwines with many sectors of society, including the media, the culture, and the economy. Europe now facilitates the jihadist values of the Arab world. This is evident in its reluctance to forthrightly denounce Islamic terrorism and its need to indict America and Israel as the causes of conflict, rather than the victims of Islamic aggression. Mass immigration of Arabs across the Mediterranean to Europe, which was part of the friendship agreement, will only strengthen the Eurabian phenomenon. If Europe continues to respond with appeasement to Islamist terror attacks like that in Madrid in 2004, Eurabia will eventually become the complete European reality.

Conclusions for the United States

Americans need to take an assertive role in both combating Eurabia's dangers and preventing a similar merger from occurring within their own country, for this is a danger. For example, American Middle East studies specialists at universities are already predominantly pro-Arab/Islamic in orientation, dismissive of traditional standards of scholarship and not bashful about politicizing formal instruction.

Americans need to embrace their own genuinely pluralist culture. They should not renounce their identity and Judeo-Christian values to appease the current assertive intolerance emanating from the Arab/Muslim world.