
Commentary

Dhimmitude

[Our Readers](#) — July 2005

To the Editor:

I read with much interest David Warren's review of my book, *Eurabia*, and I am obliged to respond to a few of his comments [Books in Review, April]. Contrary to what Mr. Warren suggests, I never claimed that a formal structure was created "to accommodate the transfer of Europe to Islamic rule." As I explained several times, the end result was not what had been at the beginning. Shortsighted policies, as well as political and economic interests and mistaken assessments, have concurred to bring Europe into a culture of submission to Islam, or "dhimmitude."

Perhaps, seen from America, the "Euro-Arab Dialogue" of the European Union is "a small component of a much vaster Euro-bureaucracy," but within Europe it has determined domestic policies that will influence the continent's politics, demography, culture, religious character, and institutions for years to come. It already affects the school systems, especially in England, France, and Denmark, and thereby will modify the character of the continent.

The Euro-Arab framework also has structured Europe's policies toward the Arab-Muslim world, America, and Israel. It has generated the Barcelona Declaration (1995), the Mediterranean Partnership, and the EU Dialogue Between Peoples and Cultures around the Mediterranean, with its Anna Lindh Foundation (2004). These are political and economic instruments that shape the entire European-Mediterranean strategy as planned by the European Council of Ministers and the European Commission, which represent the highest political and executive level of the EU. The Euro-Arab Dialogue is not the expedient device of Euro-bureaucrats, as Mr. Warren suggests, but the common vision of European leaders, heads of state, and governments.

The "authoritative pronouncements" whose alleged absence leads Mr. Warren to dismiss the political significance of the Euro-Arab Dialogue are in fact plentiful. They appear in the many official endorsements over the years of Arab-League policy in the Middle East by representatives of the European Community—and to this day by the EU foreign policy chief, Javier Solana. As for the supposedly missing "political bricks and mortar," they are evident in the meetings and discussions held among the leaders of the European Community (and, later, the European Union) in Brussels and other European cities. It is through such negotiations that the policies of the numerous states making up the European Union are determined and implemented.

Bat Ye'or

Geneva, Switzerland

David Warren writes:

Bat Ye'or may well be right that things look different from America. The purport of my review was that she had correctly diagnosed a broad tendency in Europe to adopt a "dhimmi"-like posture of accommodation toward the increasingly aggressive Islamic presence inside and around the continent. But the bureaucratic measures she presents as causes, I take as symptoms. Our views seem to converge at the point where she insists that "the end result" of the European Union's formal Euro-Arab dialogue "is not what had been at the beginning."