



Nativism, Racism And Islamophobia In The Strange Death Of Europe: Immigration, Identity, Islam By Douglas Murray

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Abstract

The shift in world politics has led to an escalation of anti-immigrant sentiments on a global scale, including Europe. Interracial strife within a societal context exerts a deleterious impact on its populace, impeding harmonious coexistence and engendering untold consequences. This research paper analyses the nativist discourse in contemporary writings, focusing particularly on Douglas Murray's book, *The Strange Death of Europe: Immigration, Identity, Islam*. The paper investigates the ways in which nativist narratives contribute to the stigmatisation of immigrants of different races, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds in Europe, with particular attention paid to Islamophobia, racism, nativism, and xenophobia. The paper examines the tension and discrimination between people of European and non-European descent in Europe, particularly in the context of nativism. It also focuses on the conflict between the European (White) and Non-European races. Murray argues that the immigrants in Europe from Arab, Asia and North Africa threaten the homogeneity of Europeans. Murray (2017) posits that Europe is imperilling its own existence by welcoming a large number of immigrants and is thus committing cultural suicide. It is propagated in Murray's work that this immigrant tide will wipe away the European culture, and Europe will become 'Eurabia', an extension of the Muslim Arab world, a term popularised by British Author Bat Ye'or. The paper will analyse how writings like Murray's are responsible for the stigmatisation of immigrants of different races, ethnicities and religious backgrounds in Europe. The paper will also try to counter Murray's claim that multiculturalism has failed and analyse the consequences of immigration on Europe's economy. The research has been carried out through a qualitative research method, and for this research, Douglas Murray's *The Strange Death of Europe: Immigration, Identity, Islam* has been used as a primary source, while the supplementary books and articles related to this book are used as secondary sources. The paper employs postcolonial and orientalist textual analysis

techniques to explore the nativist motif in Murray's work, highlighting its impact on the discourse of anti-immigrant sentiments in Europe.

Keywords: Nativism, Xenophobia, Anti-Immigration, Islamophobia, Racism.

Paper

Migration has existed since primordial times. People have migrated from one place to another since the beginning of mankind. However, its outcomes and repercussions have been different in different societies and times. With the ease of facilities and advancements in transportation movement of people from one place to another in search of jobs and better opportunities has increased. As they say, the world has become a global village, and the people have become more connected. People migrate to near or far off places as per their convenience. A considerable number of Asians, Africans and Arabs migrate to Western Europe and America for better prospects. However, the migrants face hostility and racial violence from the natives. There has been a rise in Xenophobia in Europe, especially after the 1990s. The mass migration of people into Western Europe since the 1970s has seen a rising radicalism among the European natives against the immigrants. It can be termed 'nativism', which draws on the postulates of hate, racism and xenophobia against the 'non-natives.' This, in turn, gave significant gains to the ultra-nationalist political parties in Europe (Aitana Guia, 2016). The second decade of the twenty-first century has seen significant growth in populism and xenophobia. The term 'nativism' was coined by Louis Dow Scisco (1901). Aitana Guia (2016) writes that 'nativism' is a construction of nationalism, and it tends to create a division within the European society on the basis of natives and non-natives, thus modifying the already existing construction of nationalism per se. According to Aitana Guia, 'nativism' centres around internal factors while 'nationalism' centres around external constraints. She argues that 'nativism' builds upon the epistemology of nationalism. In Europe, 'nativism' is a policy of exclusion, culturally programmed and is scheduled against the immigrants. The term has become more generic for "opposition to migration" based on the fear that immigrants will distort or spoil the existing cultural values. The binary of "us versus them" is a predominant trope of 'nativism'. More than "opposition to migration", it is xenophobia and hate against immigrants. Nativist groups tend to stop cultural changes by terming the immigrants' culture as foreign, which will spoil the so-called native culture. Immigrants are made scapegoats for many problems like crime, pollution, lack of jobs, shortage of houses and public welfare schemes. (Cochrane, C., Nevitte, N, 10 Sept. 2012).

According to Cas Mudde (2012), a Dutch political scientist, 'nativism' is "an ideology, which holds nations should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group (the nations) and that non-native elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation-state". Mudde says that the terms like racism, ultra-nationalism, and xenophobia do not wholly define the phenomenon of 'nativism'. According to Mudde, 'nativism' is much more than just hate or prejudice against the non-natives; it is "a view on how a state should be structured." Oxford dictionary defines

'nativism' as —a return to or emphasis on indigenous customs, in opposition to outside influences."

The nativist writings are gaining widespread popularity as some of these writings have become national bestsellers in Europe, as well as within non-European right-wing circles. Bat Ye'or, in her work 'Eurabia: Euro-Arab Axis', tries to assert that the idea of Europe is being subverted. Europe has surrendered to Islam, and immigrants, particularly Muslims, will overwhelm Europe, and Europe will become Eurabia. Douglas Murray seems to be heavily influenced by Bat Ye'or. Douglas Murray's *The Strange Death of Europe: Immigration, Identity, Islam* is one such account in which the 'othering' of the 'orient' and the darker races emerges as a significant trope. He writes in his account that Europe is committing suicide by accepting immigrants.

Paul Collier (2013), in *Exodus: How Migration is Changing Our World*, discusses the effects of migration— on the migrant, the country they exit, as well as the country they emigrate to. Collier observes the problem of 'brain drain', which according to him, is a major drawback of migration, something that is often overlooked (pp. 195-216).

Lucas G. Drouhot and Victor Nee (Drouhot and Nee) in "Assimilation and the Second Generation in Europe and America: Blending and Segregating Social Dynamics Between Immigrants and Natives" propose that religious difference in Europe is one of the most important factors which complicates the process assimilation.

Daniel Stockemer and Shona Moreau (Mar 18, 2021), in "Muslim Immigrants' Sense of Identity and Belonging in the Western World: A Comprehensive Review", write about the belonging and identity of Muslims and other races in the countries they migrate to. The identity and belonging depend on the country of residence and the immigrant's education at the individual level. The acceptance and rejection of far-right anti-immigrant rhetoric do not depend on the unemployment rate; rather, it depends on the interaction between the level of unemployment and the presence of far-right parties. The far-right parties are responsible for instigating the rhetoric of the high unemployment rate into an anti-immigrant sentiment for their political advantages (Cochrane & Nevitte, 10 Sept, 2012).

Pippa Norris and Ronald F. Inglehart (1 May, 2012), in "Muslim Integration into Western Cultures: Between Origins and Destinations", argue that Muslim Immigrants in western countries gradually absorb and assimilate with the host culture. Rahsaan Maxwell and Erik Bleich (16 Jun, 2014), in "What Makes Muslims Feel French?" write that "religiosity is not the dominant factor shaping Muslims' attitudes". They have depicted a positive picture of assimilation of the immigrant religion with that of the native religion of France.

Claire L. Adida, David D. Laitin and Marie-Anne Valfort (2016), in "Why Muslim Integration Fails in Christian-Heritage Societies", write that there is an equilibrium of mutual discrimination between the hosts and the immigrants in France. According to them, "the host population discriminates against Muslims even when it does not expect any particular hostility from them" (Adia, Laitin & Valfort, 2016, p.14).

There has been ample research on colonial writings and colonialism, but limited research has been done on racist, anti-immigrant and nativist writings. This paper deals

with the racist and nativist writings and their impact on immigrants, the consequential increase in Xenophobia, Islamophobia and racial violence. The paper maps the ideologies acquired by the writer to propagate Islamophobia and racism. It deals with the effect of this anti-human propaganda on the migrants and Muslims, and the myth of the Islamic invasion of Europe created by such literature.

The Strange Death of Europe: Immigration, Identity, Islam is an extremely racist and Islamophobic account by British author and journalist Douglas Murray. Douglas Murray is a far-right critic of Islam. Murray was associate director of the Henry Jackson Society from 2011 to 2018. Murray is a controversial writer, accused of promoting many far-right conspiracy theories. Murray is strong supporter of Israel against the Palestinians. According to Nafeez Ahmed in "White Supremacists at the Heart Of Whitehall", Murray conveys a form of 'far-right entryism', and the conservatives are intended to promote violence against Muslims and activists falsely under the garb of combatting terrorism. In this article Nafeez Ahmed (2015) quotes Murray's extremely fascist hate speech in the Dutch parliament, which is as follows,

"It is late in the day, but Europe still has time to turn around the demographic time-bomb which will soon see a number of our largest cities fall to Muslim majorities. It has to. All immigration into Europe from Muslim countries must stop. In the case of a further genocide such as that in the Balkans, sanctuary would be given on a strictly temporary basis. This should also be enacted retrospectively. Those who are currently in Europe having fled tyrannies should be persuaded back to the countries which they fled from, once the tyrannies that were the cause of their flight have been removed. Conditions for Muslims in Europe must be made harder across the board: Europe must look like a less attractive proposition. We in Europe owe - after all - no special dues to Islam. We owe them no religious holidays, special rights or privileges." (Ahmed, 2015)

It is evident from his writings, and in this book also, Murray has documented many false and unlikely reasons for the decline of Europe. It seems that he viciously propels the far-right conspiracy theory of 'Great Replacement', which states that the white European population is being replaced culturally and demographically by non-European races through mass migration (Murray 109-114). There are repetitive themes and accounts of vilifying migrants and Muslims as criminals and terrorists set on a mission to conquer Europe. Murray takes pride in his 'white British' race and demonises other races in this work. This book is a polemic against non-European races and a right-wing propaganda against immigrants of non-European races. Murray claims in the book that Europe is in the process of self-death, and the demise is inevitable. He writes that "the civilisation we know as Europe is in the process of committing suicide and that neither Britain nor any other Western European country can avoid that fate" (Murray 01).

Murray's book is documentation to promote bigotry, xenophobia, racism, Islamophobia and anti-immigration. His work exoticizes the 'Orient' and demeans the East as backward, anti-modern and a mismatch with the culture of Europe. He writes that the "Muslim father does not want his daughter to become like Western women" (Murray

226) and that "The more Islam there is in a society, the more dislike and distrust there is in that society towards Islam" (Murray 237). He disregards multiculturalism and exhibits it to be the cause of the "death of Europe" (Murray 94-122).

Murray talks about two concatenations' responsible for the 'death of Europe', which is irreversible, and it is impossible to recover from that demise. First is "the mass migration of the people into Europe post-Second World War to compensate for the labour shortage" (Murray 37-61). This, according to him, led to the replacement of the culture of Europe with that of non-European, i.e., Pakistani, Indian, African and Arabian. He relates this influx of colonised people as 'striking back of the empire', thus recapitulating Europe's imperialistic history. His narrative is highly racist and demeaning: "Most of the people are black, and they are making their way for the suburbs" (Murray 111). Secondly, Europe's 'loss in faith, beliefs and traditions.' is another concatenation. Murray referring to Miguel de Unamuno, writes that Europe has lost the 'tragic sense of life' (Murray 03). He mocks the assimilation of the people of Genoa and Florence into Italy (Murray 04). According to him, Europeans were foolish to give up everything for the lavish lifestyle. He refutes the idea that a 'new story must begin' for which migration is acceptable, for the intermingling of whites and non-whites. He writes: "Europe was never, for instance, continent of Islam" (Murray 04). He is fearful that in future, the culture of Eretria and Afghanistan will contaminate Europe's culture. Murray fears that Islam will take over Europe. Ian Almond (11 Aug, 2017), in "Misrecognising the problem: Douglas Murray's *The Strange Death of Europe*", argues that Murray is trying to dodge history. He writes, "Somebody should inform the author that Spain, Sicily and parts of Southern Italy were Muslim for centuries before they were ever Catholic." So, many parts of Europe were dominated by Islam much before Christianity. Thus, Murray's claims are unrealistic and biased. Murray deliberately ignores history to propagate hatred against Islam and non-European races through his discriminatory writings.

Murray has drawn a few "excuses" that he claims Europeans made to themselves, which led to the mass migration of people possible. (Murray 37-61). Firstly, he claims that Europeans have a false belief that their economy saw a boom with the influx of immigrants. According to him, the migrants have drained Europe's wealth, but the statics have shown that migrants pay taxes more than the facilities they avail in Europe. Christian Dustmann and Tommaso Frattini (4 Nov, 2014) in "The Fiscal Effects of Immigration to the UK" suggest that rather than being a burden on Europe's economic system, immigrants have contributed positively to Europe's public finances, while native Europeans have made a negative fiscal contribution. The far-right anti-immigration political parties (for example, Fidesz in Hungary or the National Rally in France) have an important role in forging the link between the crumbling economy and anti-immigrant sentiment (Cochrane and Nevitte, 10 Sept, 2012). According to the data provided by Christian Dustmann and Tommaso Frattini (Nov 04, 2014), immigrants are 43% less likely to receive tax benefits and credits as compared to the natives. They have also collected data about the educational background of the immigrants. Dustmann and Frattini (4 Nov, 2014) propose that in 2011 the percentage of natives with a degree was 21%, while that of immigrants was 38%. This data invalidates Murray's claim that

immigrants from other races are from a poor educational background and that they contribute negatively to the economy of Europe. So, it becomes obvious that Murray considers some government statistics as valid, which suits his propaganda, negating other data which is not compatible with his bigotry.

Secondly, Europeans carry a tyranny of guilts- colonial guilt and holocaust guilt, leading to a hefty burden on their conscience (Murray 163). But migration is not possible because of guilt or burden among Europeans but because of globalisation. Aisahath Reeshan and Zubair Hassan (April 2017, p. 167) have discussed globalisation and its positive impact on world finances in "Impact Of Globalisation On Economic Growth Among Developing Countries". They write, quoting H.E. Daly, that "Globalisation refers to 'as global economic integration of many formerly national economies into one global economy, mainly by free trade and free capital mobility, but also by easy or uncontrolled migration" (Reeshan and Hassan, April 2017, p. 167). Thus, they claim that globalisation has a positive impact on world economic growth. Therefore, migration has been possible because of the improved connectivity and transportation. The present world is interconnected, globalised and multicultural. The migration of people happens across the world, and people more or less shift from one place to another.

Murray endorses the European racist and Anti-Islam —E.D.L and PEGIDA movements and advocates that people from other races have contaminated Europe (Murray 238-244). He repetitively demonises the non-European races and Muslims as uncultured. He sees Muslims as some exotic group of people who will never meld and assimilate. (Murray 134-148). Murray is prejudiced against Muslims and other races and considers them as backward, intolerant, lustful, homophobic and patriarchal (Murray 50-61). His view is that "dark-skinned men had a penchant for abusing white women" (Murray 194). Murray's hatred against the immigrants comes to the fore when he endorses the view of Hanne Kristin Rohde, a former police officer in Oslo, that rape is a cultural problem. Thus, Murray's prejudice is predisposed as he tries to illustrate that the people of Pakistan, India, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey have a culture of rape (Murray 56). However, rape is a universal problem and women in every culture and society face sexual harassment (Craig Palmer, Jan 1989). The statistics have shown that there is no connection between rape and immigration (Eck and Fariss).

Murtaza Hussain (2018) invalidates Douglas Murray's claim that crime rates in Europe have increased since the arrival of immigrants. According to Esther King's article "Germany records lowest crime rate since 1992" (8 May, 2018), in Politico, as cited in Murtaza Hussain's "The Far Right is Obsessed with a book about Muslims Destroying Europe" (25 Dec, 2018), Hussain writes that Germany, which has taken the highest number of immigrants and refugees, has shown the "lowest national crime rate". Similarly, the crime rate has decreased in Italy as well. According to the Italian National Institute of Statistics (2007-2016), data collected by Donato Di Carlo, Julia Schulte-Cloos and Giulia Saudelli (2018) state a significant decline in the crime rate after the 1990s.

Murray has not included even a single attack in this account, carried out by far-right extremists on immigrants and Muslims in Europe. In 1897 in Lasithi, Greece, at least

1000 Muslims were massacred by Cretan Christians and displaced many more (New York Times, 19 Feb, 1897). The anti-Muslim bombings of 1973 in Marseille, France, were executed by the anti-Arab terrorist group, Charles Martel (New York Times, 15 Dec, 1973). In a 'racially motivated' incident, Jamia Masjid in Preston, England, was vandalised and attacked in March 2006 (Arabic News, 10 Mar, 2006). Several mosques and Islamic centres have been vandalised across Europe since the 1990s. In 2011 in Norway, a man named Anders Behring Breivik, who had extremist views on Islam, killed at least 75 people and injured hundreds in a series of attacks (New York Times, 22 Jul, 2011). Thus, there are numerous incidents of violence and attacks on Muslims and on the non-native races to which Douglas Murray has turned a blind eye, and such incidents find no reference in this book. He has not included a single attack carried out by far-right extremists on immigrants and Muslims in Europe. Murray's views are restrained on the attacks on immigrants and Muslims. He has presented a one side story of the racial and religious conflict in Europe.

Murray's racism is evident throughout this work; he writes that travelling in an RER train in France is like an underground African train. Most of the people in RER are 'black'. He thinks of African trains as something very shabby and substandard. He writes that,

"To wander the district of Saint-Denis today is to see a district more resembling North Africa than France. The market square outside the basilica is a souk more than a market. Stalls sell different styles of hijab, and radical groups hand out literature against the state." (Murray 110-111).

The markets and places of Europe do not look like Europe, and Murray considers this as a loss of European culture. He advocates that multiculturalism has failed (Murray 94-122). However, multiculturalism has become an essential part of the study with cultural, ethnic and racial group conflicts. Multiculturalism helps to study the psychological and behavioural traits of expatriates, international students, immigrants, refugees and other displaced people. Veronica Benet-Martinez (Feb, 2012) defines multiculturalism in "Multiculturalism: Cultural, Social and Personality Processes" as "the experience of having been exposed to and having internalised two or more cultures". She acknowledges Barrack Obama as an exemplification of the word multiculturalism. Exposure to one and more cultures provides an individual with better insight to judge a situation and act. 'Nativism' and multiculturalism are contrasting ideas. Multiculturalism has been found to have a positive connotation for psychological and sociocultural adjustment. According to Martinez, (Feb, 2012), this positive relationship between multiculturalism and adjustment is because of the "competencies and flexibility" the person imbibes while using multi-culture. Inferentially, multiculturalism has little or no negative implication but is becoming a positive aspect of the globalised world.

"For instance, the six Gulf Cooperation countries comprising Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Oman had granted asylum to a grand total of zero Syrian refugees by 2016." (Murray 158).

Murray claims that the Arabian countries don't welcome immigrants into their own lands (Murray 158). Ian Almond (2017) writes that Douglas Murray has

misrepresented the problem and falsely accused the Arabs. Almond notes that Gulf countries have taken thousands of Syrians and provided employment to them. Therefore, his assertion is false as Arab has employed many immigrants from across the world.

Nativism and Race studies definitely have ample scope for future studies. Murray compliments nativist writers like Michel Houellebecq, Jean Raspail, Bruce Bawer and Oriana Fallaci in this book, which will open vistas for further research.

The deliberate attempt to create propaganda of racial and cultural invasion by writing such hate-filled literature has devastating effects in modern society, especially on minorities and non-natives. The nativist writings tend to instigate racial violence and anti-immigrant sentiment. A multicultural global world is the need of the hour. Academicians need to be aware of such biased writings, and the distortion of history, in order to create a counter-narrative and debunk such myths.

Undertaking

The paper was conceived by four authors, who hereby confirm the sole responsibility for all the sections cited in this paper and declare that this manuscript is original, has not been published before and is not currently being considered for publication elsewhere.

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