

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نياشد تن من مباد بدین بوم ویر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبان های اروپایی

<http://original.antiwar.com/justin/2015/02/15/must-europe-be-an-american-colony/print/>

Must Europe Be An American Colony?

By Justin Raimondo

February 15, 2015

Francis Fukuyama's famous essay "The End of History?" contains a phrase that aptly describes the common conception of Europe today: positing that the ideological battle for liberal democracy has already been won, Fukuyama describes what he calls the "post-historical period" – not without a note of sadness – as "the perpetual caretaking of the museum of human history." This is the popular image of Old Europe: a place for tourists to marvel at the wonders of a civilization that long ago reached its apogee, but otherwise basking in its own stagnation. And surely Fukuyama prefigured the European predicament as he went on to write:

"I can feel in myself, and see in others around me, a powerful nostalgia for the time when history existed. Such nostalgia, in fact, will continue to fuel competition and conflict even in the post-historical world for some time to come."

One needn't endorse Fukuyama's Hegelian determinism to see Europe's current condition in this passage. As that vast sterility which is the European Union tries to absorb national particularities, ancient national personas defiantly reassert themselves. The transnationalist idealism of Europe's political class is increasingly challenged by populist movements surging up from the grassroots – a continent-wide insurgency that threatens to upend the EU.

Nationalist parties are on the rise: in France, the anti-EU National Front came in first in the European parliamentary elections, a result that has the political class in a panic – and with good

reason. Across the Channel, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), formerly a right-wing sect, has mounted an astonishingly successful challenge to the "major" parties, advocating withdrawal from the EU and thumbing its nose at the smug paternalism of the political Establishment. In Greece, anti-EU populism wears a "left" face, with Syriza – a coalition of left-Social Democrats, Euro-communists, and half a dozen Trotskyist grouplets – beating the right-center opposition and forming a government. Spain and Italy, too, victims of EU-imposed austerity, are in political turmoil, with anti-EU parties and movements arising on the crest of the protest wave.

All these phenomena, whatever their shortcomings, share a common insight to one degree or another: that the attempt to create a united Europe is a mask for something else – the rationalization of European industry, the legal codification of social democratic norms throughout the continent, and – ultimately – the final subordination of Europe to the United States.

Economically, the EU has been an unmitigated disaster. The creation of the euro as the continental currency, backed up by a European central bank – i.e. a continent-wide inflationary cartel – meant that Brussels became Europe's supreme economic planner, in effect supplanting the governments of the member states. It also meant that the EU bureaucrats, aside from imposing a bewildering array of regulations, campaigned hard to force member states to raise taxes. Yet this essentially Keynesian-corporatist program was presented with a phony "free market" face, emphasizing open borders and the abolition of tariffs and trade quotas – and this line is being pushed by some confused libertarians, who don't understand either economics or the politics involved.

Far from being an example of the free market in action, the EU is a semi-socialist corporatist monstrosity that exists to perpetuate and expand the power of the same three centers of power that have dominated the US since the New Deal: Big Government, Big Business, and Big Labor. Sitting atop it all is the political class, which regulates the economy in the interests of corporate CEOs and the labor aristocracy, and conducts its foreign policy according to the latest diktats from Washington.

The EU is, in effect, is a political outgrowth of NATO, a military alliance formed at the outset of the cold war to act as a bulwark against alleged Soviet expansionism. The dominant members of the EU, France and Germany, attached themselves to the US after World War II, protected by the American nuclear shield and subordinating themselves to the exigencies of the cold war. After the implosion of the Warsaw Pact and the demise of Soviet Communism, the NATO-crats faced a power vacuum to the east – and acted quickly to fill it. Relentlessly pushing eastward, NATO absorbed most of the more advanced countries of the former Soviet bloc, including the Baltic states, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic – and now even including backward little Albania. EU membership followed shortly afterward.

Despite promises to the contrary, NATO expanded right up to the gates of Moscow – and herein lies Europe's other great problem, right up there with the stultifying statism and super-centralism of the EU's economic regime.

Russia is a natural extension of Europe: it provides the greater part of the continent's energy needs. Russo-German trade is at an all-time high. A Europe without Russia is a deformed giant, crippled by its own incompleteness – and yet the NATO-ization of the EU has prevented this happy union from coming about.

Instead, the political class in Europe has acted against its own interests and taken up arms in the new cold war against Russia. Pushed by Washington and London, the Europeans, with Germany in the lead, have worked to reduce Russia's influence in and connection to the continent. The first act of this aggression was staged in Kosovo, where an alien implantation of primarily Muslim Kosovars was consolidated in the midst of Europe by force of arms. The second act is now underway in Ukraine, where a long campaign by the Germans and the Americans succeeded in overthrowing the elected President and installing a coup regime in Kiev.

While fighting under the ostensible banner of "European values," and seizing on the issue of a trade agreement with Europe that no one in Ukraine really understood, the EU's Ukrainian campaign was really energized by a kind of historical reenactment – a replay of World War II. Except that in this version of history being wound back on itself, the Ukrainian ultra-nationalists – ideological descendants of the Ukrainian SS divisions who collaborated with the Nazis in World War II – beat the Russians, at least in western Ukraine. This accounts for the increasingly visible neo-Nazi movement in Ukraine, which today constitutes the backbone of Ukrainian troops fighting to crush the rebellious Moscow-backed east Ukrainians.

Aiming at nothing less than regime change in Moscow, Washington and its junior partners in the EU have launched a new cold war – albeit not without some backlash within the EU states. The populist anti-EU movements in Britain and France are not anti-Russian, and see no tangible benefit in joining this particular jihad. European business is hardly united around the anti-Russian consensus, either: the economic sanctions insisted on by the US are hurting them as well as the Russians, and threatening Europe's shaky banks. If Russia should repudiate its debts, those banks would go under – and the effects of such a disaster would circulate worldwide.

Another bit of blowback from Europe's subordination to Washington has been the European crisis of Islam. With substantial Muslim populations, the continent has lately become a battleground in radical Islam's war on the West. The blowback from the US-led Allied invasion of Iraq has been felt in France, with the Paris attack on a French satirical magazine, and more recently in Copenhagen, Denmark – where an attack by Muslim extremists on a "free speech" conference underscored the cultural and political conundrum at the heart of Europe's growing terrorist problem.

Having gone along with Washington's post-9/11 rampage through the Middle East, it is the Europeans who are suffering the most from its inevitable consequences. In France, England, and Germany – all with substantial Muslim minorities – groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS are making their appeal. Thousands of Europeans have traveled to Syria to join the jihadists, and when they come home they are a ticking time bomb.

The truncated and thoroughly colonized Europe of today has no future but one of economic stasis, political polarization, and basking in past glories – and yet, another future is possible.

A vision of Europe as economically coherent yet with plenty of room for cultural and political particularity would carry with it all the alleged advantages of the EU and none of the disadvantages. Instead of a European central bank and the Brussels bureaucracy issuing decrees, a true market economy would free up entrepreneurial energies and turn an economic basket case into a productive powerhouse. (That isn't about to happen, at least anytime soon: although classical liberalism was born in Europe, it died there in the flames of two world wars, and efforts to revive are highly problematic.)

In any case, the second ingredient for a European revival is *decentralization*. While the EU is built along the old Soviet model – Marxists of all varieties, including Social Democrats, have long called for a "United Socialist States of Europe" – this is a non-starter, for all the reasons given above. The alternative model is the decentralized confederation of "free cities" that constituted the medieval era Hanseatic League, which, as the libertarian economist and theorist Murray Rothbard pointed out, led to an unprecedented liberation of economic energy:

"Too many historians have fallen under the spell of the interpretation of the late 19th-century German economic historians (for example, Schmoller, Bucher, Ehrenberg): that the development of a strong centralized nation-state was requisite to the development of capitalism in the early modern period. Not only is this thesis refuted by the flourishing of commercial capitalism in the Middle Ages in the local and noncentralized cities of northern Italy, the Hanseatic League, and the fairs of Champagne – not to mention the disastrous economic retrogression imposed by the burgeoning statism of the 14th century. It is also refuted by the outstanding growth of capitalist economy in free, localized Antwerp and Holland in the 16th and 17th centuries. Thus the Dutch came to outstrip the rest of Europe while retaining medieval local autonomy and eschewing state building, mercantilism, government participation in enterprise – and aggressive war."

Independence campaigns in Scotland, the Basque country, "Padania" in northern Italy, etc., are all movements going in the right direction, whatever their peculiar political coloration. The EU, as the guarantor of political as well as economic stasis, stands as an obstacle to this healthy decentralist trend.

Thirdly, and most importantly, Europe must cease being a colony of the United States: a good proportion of its current troubles, especially the rise of terrorism, can be traced back to the policy of diplomatic and military subordination to Washington. Aspiring to become the noblemen to Washington's imperial hegemon, Europe's politicians are cutting their constituents' throats to save their own necks. The Germans, the French, the British, and all the rest gain nothing from their governments' support for Washington's wars – including especially the new cold war against Russia. It's high time the American occupation of Europe was ended: yes, US troops are still there, sixty years after the end of World War II. Until the "Atlanticist" consensus holding sway over European policymakers is ended, the continent will never be independent, prosperous, and free.

Europe is at a crossroads. One path leads to dependence on and subordination to Washington, the other to an independent course. Which road it takes will determine the future of a continent that birthed the Enlightenment, the industrial revolution, and the libertarian ideals that made the American Revolution possible.

NOTES IN THE MARGIN

You can check out my Twitter feed by going here. But please note that my tweets are sometimes deliberately provocative, often made in jest, and largely consist of me thinking out loud.