

Becoming the Strong Horse: Reviving Christian Europe

by [Mark Tapson](#) (December 2018)



The Tower of Blue Horses, Franz Marc, 1913

The bestselling French novel *Soumission* (*Submission* in translation), by the always-provocative nihilist Michel Houellebecq, features a literature professor at the Sorbonne named François who is the very embodiment of Europe's secularized decadence. After an alliance between the Socialist Party and the Muslim Brotherhood Party results in a fundamental transformation of the country's political landscape, François finds himself living in an Islamic patriarchy in which polygamy is legal, all teachers are required to be Muslim, and his university is renamed the Islamic University of Paris-Sorbonne.

"The facts were plain," François observed. "Europe had reached a point of such putrid decomposition that it could not longer save itself, any more than fifth-century Rome could have done. This wave of new immigrants, with their traditional culture—of natural hierarchies, the submission of women, and respect for elders—offered a historic opportunity for the moral and familial rearmament of Europe." The fight "to establish a new organic phase of civilization could no longer be waged in the name of Christianity. Islam, its sister faith . . . had taken up the torch."

With no moral or spiritual center to ground him, François is easily seduced by the new order and converts to Islam in order to gain a more prestigious position at the university and to indulge in arranged marriages with sexually compliant young wives. He chooses the path of least resistance to the "foregone conclusion" of Muslim domination. His submission, symbolic of Europe's ongoing capitulation to an ascendant Islamic fundamentalism, is every bit as chilling as Winston Smith's embrace of Big Brother at the conclusion of Orwell's

Nineteen Eighty-Four.

Many books have been written identifying the causes of Europe's slow-motion cultural suicide, among them a tsunami of Muslim immigration, the corrosive effects of political correctness and multiculturalism, willfully blind political elites, and perhaps most significantly, the decline of Christianity. What Matthew Arnold called "the melancholy, long withdrawing roar" of Christianity's retreat from the continent is leaving a vacuum of moral and spiritual conviction which a virile, unconflicted Islam is filling. Christianity, as François notes, "had renounced its temporal powers, and so had sealed its own doom."

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The result, as we are all painfully aware, is that an enervated Europe now is riddled with Muslim no-go zones and sharia courts. Calls to prayer are blasted publicly from loudspeakers and streets blocked by praying believers. Polygamy and female genital mutilation abound. Sexual assaults and anti-Semitic hate crimes are skyrocketing. The push for blasphemy laws is finding increasing support. And of course, the continent experiences periodic bursts of violent jihad ranging from "lone wolf" attacks to coordinated assaults on concert crowds and commuter trains.

I visited Paris last October. Several times I witnessed units of French soldiers patrolling tourist hotspots, scanning for potential terrorists. Their presence made me feel safer but

also more conscious of the threat. It sounds paranoid and melodramatic, but as I walked the streets I made sure I positioned myself in ways that would protect me from the increasingly common danger of vehicular jihad. A few months after my trip, authorities erected anti-terrorism barriers around the Eiffel Tower, including ten-foot high panels of bulletproof glass. Such is the new normal across western Europe.

One day while out and about in Paris, I wore a black t-shirt with a large red Templar cross on it. I was curious to see what kind of reaction I might trigger wearing a Crusader cross in the most Islamized country in Europe. I threw a blazer on over it, but the cross was still very visible. In truth, however, I expected I might get a dirty look at worst, possibly a verbal challenge.

I got neither, but the cross did inspire an unexpected reaction. At one point, a white Frenchman, perhaps in his thirties, approached me excitedly, pointed to the cross rather surreptitiously, and said to me *sotto voce*, "Je comprends le signification, monsieur!"—"I understand the significance!" He gave me a big smile and a thumbs-up and went on his way. The encounter felt almost covert, as if he and I had to be careful about openly declaring our Christian faith in a Christian country, a Christian *continent*, surrendering to Islam.

But there is more to the Islamization of the West than Christianity's capitulation. A related but often overlooked cause is the *emasculat*ion of the West.

Cultural Marxists have been waging a decades-long assault on the nuclear family through the feminist eradication of gender distinctions. Deconstructing traditional masculinity is the tip of the spear of that campaign, because once society accepts that “male” and “female” are false social constructions rather than biological truths, and that masculinity is nothing more than an oppressive and toxic mask, then the State can finally become our father, and there will be no force left to defend our civilization from threats both internal and external. The result of this war on masculinity is that boys and young men in the West are in crisis today in a variety of ways which have often been enumerated by myself and others, foremost of which is a crippling self-doubt about a man’s duties to his loved ones, his country, and his civilization.

Here is one jaw-dropping example of the degree to which Western men have succumbed to a lack of confidence about their masculine nature: you will recall that upwards of 1200 sexual assaults took place in various German cities on New Year’s Eve 2015, committed by Muslim migrants from a true rape culture which the European elites had imported into the continent through unchecked immigration. After that horrific night, a few hundred outraged Dutch men in Amsterdam decided to march for the victims. To show their solidarity with the assaulted women, the men marched *wearing short skirts*.

It is impossible to imagine such a toothless, effeminate gesture striking fear into the heart of men from the hyper-masculinized Muslim culture metastasizing in Europe. Even the official response from law enforcement reeked of timidity. Their answer to the rapes was not to take aggressive action to punish the perpetrators and prevent future gang assaults, but to urge European women to change their *own* behavior to avoid

further victimization: travel in groups, avoid going out at night, dress more modestly, and most absurdly, wear temporary tattoos that read "No!"—as if this would deter gangs of rapists.

A civilization whose men will not or cannot rise to the defense of its women and children is signaling to the wolves beyond the gates—or in this case, inside the gates—that it is ripe for conquest. It is a doomed civilization.

Christianity has suffered since the Middle Ages from the perception that it is a feminine religion, which stems partly from its veneration of the Virgin Mary and partly from its emphasis on peace, love, and forgiveness. Church congregations today are dominated by women. Fundamentalist Islam, on the other hand—the ideology of a warlord—offers young men a seductive vision of male dominance and aggression, not to mention an afterlife teeming with virgins. Houellebecq's François admires this appeal; he refers approvingly to a quote from Nietzsche's *The Anti-Christ*: "If Islam despises Christianity, it has a thousandfold right to do so: Islam at least assumes that it is dealing with *men*."

A report from Egypt several years ago noted that Muslims there were stickering their cars with shark symbols as taunting response to the Christian "fish" sticker which some members of the Coptic minority pasted on their own cars. When asked about it, one young Muslim laughed and said, "The Christians had the fish so we responded with the shark. If they want to portray themselves as weak fishes, OK. We are the strongest." There could not be a more starkly-stated crystallization of how many Muslims perceive the cultural conflict.

Another example. A few months ago I saw a video online of a couple of Christians who had set up a little table on a street corner in Dearborn, Michigan and were trying to share pamphlets and proselytize politely to passersby. Right on that same corner, two young Muslim males set up a loudspeaker, aimed it at the Christians, and blasted the Islamic call to prayer at them. It was a clear gesture of intimidation and supremacism. The Christians looked frustrated and helpless. What could they do? Perhaps they might have met the challenge by bringing their own loudspeaker and blasting "Onward Christian Soldiers" right back at the Muslim men.

That martial hymn that has all but vanished from church services these days, unfortunately. Instead of "marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going on before," the Christian community now too often turns the other cheek. The position of too many Christians toward Islam today, most notably Pope Francis himself, is a combination of naïve denial and appeasement through interfaith outreach. Last July, the Grand Imam of Cairo's al-Azhar University even thanked the Pope for his "defense of Islam against the accusation of violence and terrorism."

In terms of building bridges between Islam and the West, however, Islamic supremacists view interfaith dialogue as more of a monologue. Muslim Brotherhood founder Sayyid Qutb argued that interfaith dialogue with the West should be undertaken only to draw infidels over to Islam, bringing concessions with them. Although jihad is on the march worldwide, the expectation always seems to be that it is the Christian West that must overcome its "Islamophobic" bigotry and offer the olive branch. As an interfaith gesture of goodwill, we welcome

the prayers of imams in our churches and synagogues, yet Muslims are never expected to reciprocate.

Christians are suffering unprecedented persecution worldwide. According to the most recent reports, some 215 million Christians worldwide face severe persecution, mostly in Muslim-majority countries. Yet a recent poll of U.S. Catholics reveals that they are more concerned about climate change than the global attacks on their brothers and sisters in Christ. Given a list of five global concerns, Catholics put Christian persecution at the bottom of the list. This is unconscionable. Christians in the Western world need to wake up. Perhaps the Pope should do less whitewashing of Islam and more speaking out in defense of its Christian victims.

The persecution is not limited to the Middle East or Africa. In 2016, an 86-year-old priest in Normandy, France was beheaded at the very altar of his church by two jihadists. Another priest was forced to film it; he was stabbed and seriously wounded. How did the French religious community respond to this outrageous act of aggression? French bishops called on Catholics for a day of fasting and prayer. They also asked Muslims living in France to come to church to "share the grief of Christians." I understand that a message of forgiveness and brotherhood is consistent with the Christian spirit; but to ignore that the assassins acted in the name of Islam, intentionally targeted a Catholic church, and slaughtered an aging priest at the very altar is cowardly denial, perhaps even a resigned acceptance.

Islamists view this as weakness and it emboldens them. They see the West is clearly crumbling. "A falling camel attracts many knives," goes an Arab saying Osama bin Laden himself

used. He also said that “when people see a strong horse and a weak horse, they naturally gravitate toward the strong horse.” Today, a patriarchal, supremacist Islam is that strong horse.

Many say that it is too late for Europe to reverse course, that the continent is finished. Others, myself included, are more optimistic, or at least refuse to go down without a fight. But what must be done? How do we become the strong horse again?

Writing for PJ Media several years ago in “Christianity: First Line of Defense for the West,” Abraham Miller, himself not a Christian, wrote that the “one solid, inescapable organizing principle that has stood as the bulwark against radical Islam is Christianity.” Not the egocentric “prosperity gospel” of many mainstream churches and megachurch pastors, but a Christianity that strengthens us for spiritual warfare. A Christianity that is less the church of Jesus the Lamb of God, and more the church of Jesus, the Lion of Judah. The church of the Jesus who righteously drove the moneychangers from the temple. The “muscular Christianity” of Victorian England. The Christianity that roused itself to push back against five hundred years of Islamic supremacism by embarking on the Crusades. The masculine spirit of Christian chivalry.

Chivalry originated in France in the Middle Ages as a code of warrior ethics among the knightly class, a code which included such values as martial prowess, honor, loyalty, and generosity. The church began to channel the unconstrained violence of knights toward more moral ends that benefitted all of society. This led to the formation of an entire order of warrior monks, the legendary Knights Templar, devoted to the defense of the church, the protection of Christian pilgrims,

and the retaking of the Holy Land from Muslim occupation. St. Bernard of Clairvaux described them as a new kind of knight, engaged in “a twofold war both against flesh and blood and against a spiritual army of evil in the heavens.” They appeared “gentler than lambs,” yet were “fiercer than lions.”

What it will take for us to reverse the West’s demise is to recover the militant spirit of Christian chivalry. Pushing back against both cultural Marxism and the Islamic tide to preserve our civilization requires such men to step up once again, cut through all our cultural gender confusion, and embrace a chivalric masculinity. C.S. Lewis wrote that the “practical and vital” tradition of chivalry “offers the only possible escape from a world divided between wolves who do not understand, and sheep who cannot defend, the things which make life desirable.”

Christian pacifists may insist, as evangelical Bible scholar Ben Witherington has said, that for the Christian “there are plenty of things worth dying for and giving your life for, but nothing worth killing for, for life is of sacred worth.” But the hard truth is that the West is locked in an epic historical struggle for survival against an existential opponent that believes there is *plenty* worth killing for. Christians wrestling with this would do well to remember the example of Archangel Michael, the patron saint of chivalry, who is usually pictured in art wielding a spear or sword “from the Armorie of God,” as Milton put it in *Paradise Lost*. Michael had no pacifist qualms about leading the other angels to war with Satan and his rebel angels and throwing them out of Heaven.

This is not to say that non-Christians have nothing to

contribute in this conflict; my friend Bosch Fawstin, for example, the anti-Islam cartoonist who won the Draw Muhammad day contest in Texas two years ago, is an ex-Muslim atheist and as fearless a critic of Islam as they come. But the primary force necessary to repel the Islamization of the West is a reinvigorated, masculinized Christianity led by those willing to engage in that twofold war Bernard of Clairvaux mentioned against flesh and blood and against spiritual evil.

In 1999, to mark the 900th anniversary of the Crusader conquest of Jerusalem, hundreds of devout Christians took part in a reconciliation walk that began in Germany and ended in the Holy Land. Along the way the walkers wore t-shirts bearing the message "I apologize" in Arabic script. The time for such self-flagellating apologies is over. We must reverse our apathetic mindset, let Archangel Michael be our inspiration, and begin fighting—in a literal sense when necessary—for our freedom, our families, our country, and our civilization.

The alternative is submission.

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