

Demographics: Why Islamic Societies are Dying

by Ibn Warraq (April 2016)

One of the most startling and original books I have read in the last five years is surely David P. Goldman's *How Civilizations Die (And Why Islam is Dying too)*.[\[1\]](#)

Right from the beginning of his Introduction, Goldman shatters so many of our strongly held beliefs that we are left reeling, and pondering the truly disturbing implications of his conclusions, which are all backed by statistics from recognized sources such as the United Nations. Here are some of his observations from his dramatic introduction, "For the first time in history, the birth rate of the whole developed world is well below replacement, and a significant part of it has passed the demographic point of no return."

However, all is not well in the Islamic world either, "But Islamic society is even more fragile. As Muslim fertility shrinks at the rate demographers have never seen before, it is converging on Europe's catastrophically low fertility as if in time-lapse photography. Iranian women in their twenties who grew up with five or six siblings will bear only or two children during their lifetimes. Turkey and Algeria are just behind Iran on the way down, and most other Muslim countries are catching up quickly. By the middle of this century, the belt of Muslim countries from Morocco to Iran will become as gray as depopulating Europe. The Islamic world will have the same proportion of dependent elderly as the industrial countries – but one tenth the productivity. A time bomb is ticking in the Muslim world".[\[2\]](#)

But, as Goldman warns, population decline will cause violent upheavals, and already Iran is responding with aggression. "We love death, and you love life"[\[3\]](#) is the common attitude among various Islamic groups. Goldman continues, "A people facing cultural extinction may well choose war, if war offers even a slim chance of survival. That is just how radical Islamists view the predicament of traditional Muslim society in the face of modernity. The Islamists fear that if they fail, their religion and culture will disappear into the maelstrom of

the modern world. Many of them would rather die fighting.”[4]

The Muslim world is facing the fastest demographic or population decline ever recorded in history.[5] Hania Zlotnik, director of the [population division](#) at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, said in a conference in 2009, “In most of the Islamic world it’s amazing, the decline in fertility that has happened.”[6] The *New York Times* reported, “From 1975 to 1980, women in Iran were giving birth to nearly 7 children per family, according to the latest U.N. population report; from 2005 to 2010 that number is expected to be less than 2. Other Middle Eastern states in the top 15, in order of the steepest drop, include Tunisia, Algeria, the United Arab Emirates, Libya, Kuwait, Qatar and Morocco.”[7] Fertility in the Muslim world has declined two or three times faster than the world average.[8]

Though there are more Iranians in their mid-twenties than in any other age bracket, they are not reproducing; educated Iranian women in their mid-twenties will only bear one child. An aging population presents grave dangers to all societies, but in poor countries with primitive social institutions, the effects will be even worse. Most Muslim countries have no public pension systems; the elderly have traditionally relied on their many children to look after them. Europe, with GDP[9] per person of \$30,000 in 2009, is wealthy enough to look after its elderly, at least to a certain extent. But “Egypt and Indonesia have less than a tenth of Europe’s per capita GDP. Algeria, like Iran, earns, \$4,400 per capita, while Pakistan shows barely \$1,000 per capita – half of Pakistanis live on \$1 a day or less. Even Turkey, the one Muslim country with some semblance of a modern economy, generates only \$8,000 per capita, about a quarter of Europe’s GDP.”[10]

However, *pace* “declinists,” America is one country that will have the people necessary to shoulder the burden of looking after its graying population, as I shall show below; the rest of the world will not have enough workers for such a task. By 2070, “several Muslim countries will have a higher proportion of elderly dependents than Western Europe. And the relative economic burden will be much, much heavier in the fast-aging Muslim countries.”[11]

IRAN AND TURKEY

If present trends continue, Iran will be grayer than Europe by 2070; Turkey’s

population is aging almost as fast. What is more, the leaders in these two countries are and have been aware of this problem for many years, and their dire warnings to their countrymen and women are hardly ever reported in the Western press. "If we continue the existing trend, 2038 will mark disaster for us," Erdogan warned his nation in 2010.[\[12\]](#) While the then President Ahmadinejad of Iran said in 2010,

"Two children' is a formula for the extinction of a nation, not the survival of a nation....The most recent data showing that there are only 18 children for every 10 Iranian couples should raise an alarm among the present generation....This is what is wrong with the West. Negative population growth will cause extinction of our identity and culture. The fact that we have accepted this places us on the wrong path. To want to consume more rather than having children is an act of genocide."[\[13\]](#)

While fertility rates of Muslims in Europe are higher than that for other women, there is evidence that over time the differences diminish. There seems to be one exception: Great Britain. Her population will rise to 77 million in 2050, and more than half the new births will come from immigrant mothers.[\[14\]](#)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Finally, we come to the United States of America. As David Goldman in Part Three of his book, with the heading *Why It Won't Be A Post-American World*, says, "Among the large industrial countries, there is one great exception to the declinist story: the United States. If a single characteristic makes America exceptional, it is the fact that American fertility has stabilized at replacement. In other words, as Europe and Japan reach the point of no return on the road to senility and depopulation, America will maintain its population along with a healthy balance among age cohorts. In the second half of this century most of the great powers of the past – Germany, Spain, Italy, Russia, and Japan, among others – will cease to function. A century later they will have ceased to exist. What makes America utterly and completely exceptional among industrial countries, in short, is that it will still be here in a hundred years."[\[15\]](#)

What is the reason or cause of this difference or exceptionalism? Goldman replies, "It is not that Americans in general are having children, but that

Americans of faith are having children, and there are more Americans of faith than citizens of any other industrial country... [Briefly,] in both Europe and America those who practice a religion have more children than those who do not. It's just that there are far more Americans than Europeans practicing a faith."[\[16\]](#)

CONCLUSIONS

The one problem with my article generally, and David Goldman's book in particular, is that, as my friend Rebecca Bynum pointed out to me, they may make us too complacent: "Islam is waning, young Muslims are becoming atheists, there is a rise in conversions to Christianity, and the fertility rate of Islamic countries is declining at an incredible speed, while that of the USA is remaining steady. So what is there to worry about?" If only it were that simple. And it is one of the merits of Goldman's book is that it does confront the problems head on. There is Obama's catastrophic foreign policy, which may well lead to a nuclear Iran. There is the militancy of American Muslims who never tire in their efforts to impose the Sharia, Islamic Law, on the rest of us, aided and abetted by the present Obama administration. And if Hillary Clinton is elected President in November 2016, then we can expect an even more sinister presence, that of the Muslim Brotherhood, in the administration. This is not right wing paranoia – thanks to the archives of the former Soviet Union we now know that FDR's administration, and the entire State Department was infiltrated by communists. Why is it then so impossible to imagine something similar happening with the Muslim Brotherhood infiltrating Hillary Clinton's White House?

But we have also other urgent moral concerns: the need to highlight the plight of the Christians in the Middle East.[\[17\]](#) The persecution, harassment, and murder of Christians in the Islamic world has worsened in the last ten years. The present Obama administration refuses to acknowledge its existence, let alone do anything about it. To acknowledge the persecution would be to destroy Obama and his administration's claim that Islam is a religion of peace. While Muslims are getting visas to the USA at an alarming rate, Christian refugees are being refused entry. We would all do well to read the tireless efforts of Raymond Ibrahim to take the present Obama administration to task for not helping Christians. Here is an extract from his recent article at *Gatestone Institute*,[\[18\]](#) "During the height of one of the most brutal months of Muslim persecution

of Christians, the U.S. State Department exposed its double standards against persecuted Christian minorities. Sister Diana, an influential Iraqi Christian leader, who was scheduled to visit the U.S. to advocate for persecuted Christians in the Mideast, was denied a visa by the U.S. State Department even though she had visited the U.S. before, most recently in 2012. She was to be one of a delegation of religious leaders from Iraq – including Sunni, Shia and Yazidi, among others – to visit Washington, D.C., to describe the situation of their people. Every religious leader from this delegation to Washington D.C. was granted a visa – except for the only Christian representative, Sister Diana. After this refusal became public, many Americans protested, some writing to their congressmen. Discussing the nun's visa denial, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich said:

This is an administration which never seems to find a good enough excuse to help Christians, but always finds an excuse to apologize for terrorists ... I hope that as it gets attention that Secretary Kerry will reverse it. If he doesn't, Congress has to investigate, and the person who made this decision ought to be fired.

The State Department eventually granted Sister Diana a visa.

The fact that there are so many ex-Muslim atheists, makes nonsense of the charge of Islamophobia hurled at all who dare to criticize Islam, that most criticisable of all religions. The unwritten subtext of such a charge is, of course, that the person so accused is ignorant, racist, and bigotted. But the existence of millions of Middle Easterners, and South Asians, who are now atheists refutes the claim that all those critical of Islam must be racists. Islam, in any case, is not a race. Second, the young Egyptians, Saudis, Iraqis and others who have firmly rejected Islam, have had experience of Islam from the inside; many of them have studied Islam to a very advanced level, and hence cannot be guilty of ignorance. And yes, they did read the Koran in the original Arabic. They know the social consequences of imposing Islam on the general populace: lack of freedom, those freedoms enshrined in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, and which we in the West take so much for granted. The charge of Islamophobia is an effective way of curtailing all rational discussions of Islam. As Christopher Hitchens once said, "Islamophobic is a word created by fascists, and used by cowards, to manipulate morons."[\[19\]](#)

[1] David P. Goldman, *How Civilizations Die (and Why Islam is Dying Too)*, Washington, D.C. : Regnery Publishing , Inc., 2011

[2] David P. Goldman, *How Civilizations Die (and Why Islam is Dying Too)*, Washington, D.C. : Regnery Publishing , Inc., 2011, Introduction, p.x.

[3] Daily Mail (UK), 9 July 2012, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2170816/Mohamed-Merah-Outrage-chilling-words-Toulouse-terrorist-broadcast-French-TV.html>

See also al-Rahma TV (Egypt) 16 November, 2012, on MEMRI: <http://www.memritv.org/clip/en/3644.htm>

[4] David Goldman, *op.cit.*, p.xiv.

[5] *Ibid.*, p.XV

[6] Neil MacFarquar, "U.N. Sees Falling Middle East Fertility Rates", *New York Times*, April 3, 2009, http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/04/03/un-sees-big-drop-in-middle-east-fertility-rates/?_r=0here.

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