

A 'Fear of Being Swamped': Why Modernity Leads to Ethno-Demographic Conflict

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Donald Horowitz, a founding father of international ethnic conflict studies, remarked upon the rhetoric of ethnic 'swamping' used by insecure ethnic groups in postcolonial Africa and Asia. 'It is common to encounter anxiety-laden perceptions of the fecundity or illegal immigration of competing groups', he remarked. Numerous ethnic communities in the first few decades of the postcolonial period, from the Sindhis and Malays to the Fijians and Karen, raised the spectre of being extinguished like the 'Red Indians' of America. (Horowitz 1985: 175-77; 194) At one level, there is a debate over whether such ethno-demographic fears are purely rhetorical or whether they correlate with demographic facts pertaining to immigration and differential ethnic population growth. This touches upon the theoretical division between ethnosymbolist scholars, who suggest that ethnic myths, symbols and boundaries are relatively immutable over time, and modernist or constructivist thinkers, who emphasise the fluidity of ethnic boundaries in response to political exigencies. (Ozkirimli 2000)

This paper does not bypass this meta-theoretical question, but its focus is more all-encompassing. It argues that modernity generates a set of changes which impinge upon both the socially constructed and demographically 'real' drivers of ethnic conflict - processes which will crest in the coming century. This conjuncture involves two prongs, one demographic, the other social. In demographic terms, modernity leads to demographic transition, but in an uneven fashion between and within nations. This induces uneven population growth rates between ethnic and national groups which increasingly produce migratory flows due to modern improvements in long-distance transportation and communication. Sociologically, modernity accelerates processes of

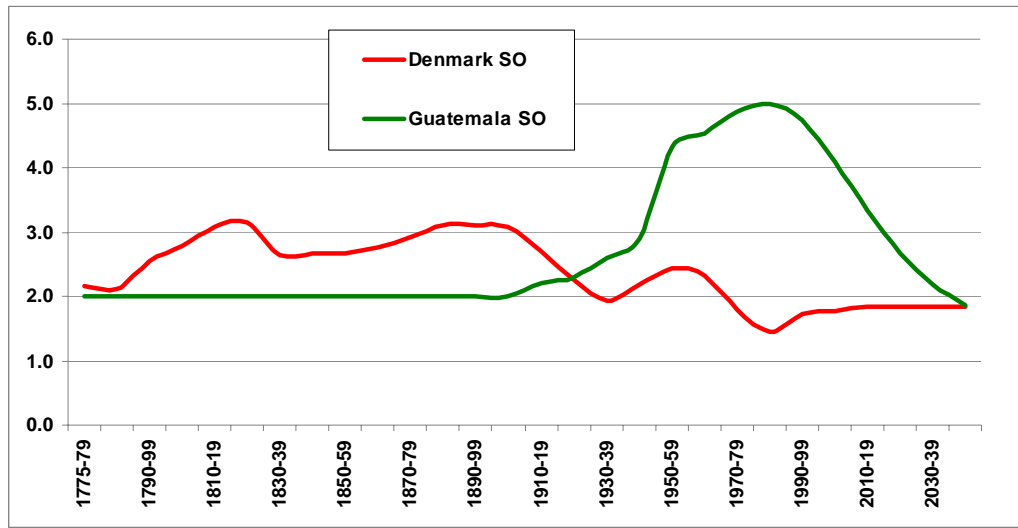
reflexivity, making nationals and ethnics more aware of themselves and their boundaries. Modern principles of popular sovereignty simultaneously empower demographic majorities at the expense of elite minorities and their clients. Of the two processes, the social has largely worked itself out over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, culminating in the fall of communism and the 'third wave' of democratization. However, the demographic changes are set to accelerate and to play off the reconfigured social architecture of nationalism.

Let us explore these demographic changes in more detail. Though the demographic transition has been in train since the mid eighteenth century, the pace of change (and hence demographic unevenness) has dramatically accelerated in the late twentieth century. In its early phase, the demographic transition led to the large scale expansion of Europe's population *vis á vis* that of the rest of the world as mortality - especially among infants - declined. However, medical technology did not cut infant mortality nearly as sharply during the centuries of European population explosion as it did in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries when the Global South has expanded. Thus the global growth differentials today are larger and more pronounced than in the past.

Figure 1 shows the trajectory of demographic transition comparing Denmark and Guatemala in terms of Surviving Offspring (SO), a measure of fertility net of infant mortality. Note the more pronounced fertility peak in Guatemala. Though this is predicted - on current trends - to fall dramatically in the coming decades, population growth has already occurred or is locked in by young age structures. At the onset of their demographic transitions, Denmark and Guatemala had similar populations, population densities and GDP per capita. By the end of their transitions, Denmark's population had expanded fivefold, but that of Guatemala is projected to

multiply by as much as 24 times before its transition is complete in the 2030s. This has dramatically altered the relative population density and GDP per capita of the two countries today.

Figure 1. A Tale of Two Transitions: Guatemala vs Denmark



Source: Skirbekk 2008

Mothers in Europe and its settler offshoots typically had three surviving offspring as their countries' populations expanded three to fourfold during their growth phase of 1800-1950. In contrast, among today's developing countries, which mainly began their transitions in the twentieth century, the number of surviving offspring has averaged around 5 children per woman, powering post-transition population levels which vary between 8 and 24 times the pre-transition population. (Skirbekk 2008) Hence the projected shrinkage of Europe's proportion of world population (despite non-European immigration) from 25 percent in 1900 to 5 percent by 2050. (Demeny and McNicoll 2006)

In effect, we are entering a period in which global population inequality will attain its zenith. This is not only true internationally, but within states, where differential ethnic population growth takes place. The two are related in the sense that long-distance differences in population growth can lead to migration flows which telescope international differences into inter-ethnic differences within states. This paper begins by mapping the interplay between modernity, demography and politics. It examines the outworking of differential ethnic population growth in several states, and proposes a model whereby ethnic conflict is linked to the nature of ethnic boundaries and their response to modernizing processes.

Modernity and Global Ethno-Demographic Change

A central message of this paper is that demography becomes increasingly important within states as modernity unfolds. Technology is the only major modern process to reduce the power of demography, which it does by enabling less populous countries to shield behind advanced weapons systems while better controlling migration flows. However, while this safeguards *nation-states* from predators in the international arena, it has little impact on relations between ethnic groups *within* states. All other outriders of modernity - liberty, equality, democracy, nationalism and globalisation - magnify the power of demography within states.

The American and French Revolutions in the eighteenth century completely altered the relationship between demography and power. When a king, often from a foreign dynasty or empire, could legitimately rule, the growth of various populations in the kingdom was immaterial. Once power was vested in the nation, however, and popular sovereignty replaced the principle of the divine right of kings, the stage was

set for demography to shape history. All of a sudden, the legal distinction between nationals and foreigners effaces legal status distinctions between the aristocracy, bourgeoisie and peasantry. Native soldiers replace foreign mercenaries, foreign rulers and non-citizens are expelled or marginalised, and shared nationality (rather than the persona of the monarch) becomes the basis for the state. (Wimmer 2002) Democracy hands power to the majority, and in ethnically-divided societies like Northern Ireland or Kenya, being the majority is crucial to winning power. If the other side cannot be disenfranchised, then one must exhort one's own side to reproduce for the group. (Horowitz 1985: 194-196)

The principle of equality, by which all individuals can lay claim to rights and resources, is another aspect of modernity that raises the demographic stakes. Under a regime of social welfare provision combined with one person one vote, shifts in population composition imply a shift in resources from one group to another. This is especially marked when one ethnic (typically native) group is aging and declining while immigrant groups are younger and growing. The difficulty in getting wealthy, taxpaying whites in many US districts to pay for public schooling and welfare facilities for younger populations of African-Americans or immigrant Hispanics has resulted in the problem of 'white flight', impoverishing certain municipalities. Even where this does not occur, elderly white voters tend to vote for lower levels of welfare state spending in more diverse areas. Hence a large body of leading political science and economic research concludes that the policy aims of ethnic diversity and welfare state provision often conflict. (Alesina et al. 1999; Putnam 2007) Where ethnic minorities economically outperform natives, as in Canada until very recently, diversity reduces social cohesion by lowering levels of trust rather than affecting support for the welfare state. (Stolle et al. 2008) In South Africa or Malaysia, or other

parts of southeast Asia, where minorities are much wealthier than natives, diversity increases support for redistribution, with tax policies targeting members of minority groups. (Chua 2003)

Liberalism is the third of the French Revolutionary trinity, and a pillar of western modernity. Like nationalism and democracy, it is also a handmaiden of demography. To the extent that liberty is extended to naturalisation and citizenship policies (this liberalisation only occurred after 1945 in most western countries), it leads to an opening of the doors of states to immigration. Ethno-demographic change cannot affect states unless they open themselves up to it. Liberalism unlocks the doors of the nation, removing its insulation from the demographic storms taking place outside. Historically, a less intensive global communications network meant that long-distance, large-scale migration from diverse sources was less prevalent. Most migration within Europe took place between regions of a country, i.e. from Andalusia to Catalonia within Spain. International migration within Europe was also common, as with Polish or Italian immigration to France. Even these regional flows once proved socially and politically traumatic.

Notwithstanding the involuntary mass transport of slaves from Africa to the Americas, major immigration flows to the New World were similarly European in origin. The Chinese and Japanese participated in these flows in small numbers, but were excluded by racially discriminatory legislation after 1882 in the USA and 1885 in Canada. The repeal of Oriental Exclusion acts after the Second World War, and the removal of ethnic preference criteria in the USA (1965), Canada (1962-67) and Australia (1966-72) marked a major extension of the principle of liberalism into the cultural and political life of the West. (Kaufmann 2004a; Cornelius et al. 1994)

In Europe, non-European immigrants of the 1950s-70s were becoming an increasingly permanent and recognised feature on the cultural landscape. At this point, it is vital to mention that the liberalisation of immigration coincidentally occurred at the same time as native fertility rates were declining, but well before the aging and decline of native populations. The liberalisation of immigration was a cultural-political phenomenon and was not driven by concerns about population decline.(Joppke 2005) It is a coincidence that it happened to take place at the dawn of an era of global demographic instability. As those demographic changes increasingly manifested themselves in the form of South-North migration flows, they lapped at the doors of western nations which had been opened in advance by liberal reformers.

On the Move: Global Migration

The differential population growth rates of the world can be viewed geologically, with a sharp gradient forming between countries which are in close proximity yet have vastly different population growth rates and age structures. This global demographic topography would feature high tablelands in sub-Saharan Africa and low plains in Europe, with notable cliffs dividing boundaries like US-Mexico and North Africa-Europe. If these landforms disintegrated, population would 'migrate' from regions of higher elevation to low-lying (ie slow growth) areas. Life is not so simple since population growth is not perfectly correlated with economic supply and demand. Even so, there is a strong link between economics and demography, and economists would predict that in a free market, excess supply of a good in one region of the world coupled with excess demand elsewhere should lead to increased trade in

the good. Ideally, labour is a factor of production which should flow across borders until its productivity equals its price everywhere. The mountains, to paraphrase Led Zeppelin, should crumble to the sea.

In reality, labour is not very mobile since it is heavily controlled by developed countries. Nonetheless, the attempt to keep out unwanted arrivals is imperfect:

William Durch suggests that US border control is 91 percent effective in apprehending Mexican illegals, yet this has failed to stem a tide of some 600-800,000 illegal immigrants per year. The need to cross water makes it more difficult to get to Europe from Africa. The EU's Frontex initiative and agreements with Maghrebian countries have helped to stabilise illegal flows at low levels over the past few years, but those who make it across are often successful in evading the authorities. Spain is just 45 percent and Italy only 30 percent effective against illegals from North Africa. Russia, whose immigrant population stock is second only to that of the United States in size, is just 2 percent effective in policing its vast southern border. (Durch 2001: 144; Economic and Social Research Council 2007)

In the five years from 2000 until 2005, roughly 17 million people successfully migrated from developing countries to the developed world. In 2006, 191 million people in the world were immigrants, up from 76 million in 1960.¹ (United Nations 2006; International Organization for Migration 2006, 2005) What is undeniable is that differential population growth between major world regions will drive immigration from the global South to the North. This new human cargo will help shore up western power by moderating population decline, but it carries highly unpredictable social and political effects. In this sense, migration merely transfers the theatre of conflict from the international to the intra-national realm.

¹ Set against the backdrop of rising global population, the numbers are less dramatic, but still suggest that the effect of post-1960 globalisation is real: the proportion of the world made up of immigrant stock increased from 2.5 percent in 1960 to 3 percent in 2006.

One way of gaining greater purchase on the link between ethnic change and conflict is to examine past cases where differential ethnic population growth has occurred within a state due to immigration, intra-state migration, differential ethnic fertility or some combination of all three. Theoretically, we could take the ethnosymbolist view that boundaries and symbolic 'border guards' will remain relatively impervious to change, or the more constructivist approach which would stress assimilation and boundary fluidity. (Smith 1986; Wimmer 2007; Barth 1969) However, as Wimmer cautions, we must take a less doctrinaire view:

The spectrum comprises situations where ethnic categorizations are tenacious and change only slowly, over the course of many generations. This seems to be the case among peoples who identify individuals through multi-generational, unilineal descent c[on]sistently (Gil-White 1999). In the

which in turn stoked Catholic grievances. (Patterson and Kaufmann 2007) Protestants dominated 65:35 when the province of Northern Ireland was created in 1921.

However, the higher Catholic birth rate and reduced Catholic emigration to Britain after 1945 shifted the balance of the population in favour of Catholics. Today, the balance is around 53:47 and Gerry Adams of the Irish republican Sinn Fein party stakes his long-term strategy on the eventual achievement of a Catholic majority in the province. This majority could, according to the provisions of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, successfully vote for a reunification of Ireland against the wishes of a future Protestant minority. Today, conflict between Protestant Orange marchers and Catholic residents is often caused by the expansion of Catholic population into formerly Protestant or previously uninhabited areas adjacent to marching routes, such as Portadown's Garvaghy Road, the scene of violent confrontations in 1985-7 and 1995-2001. (Kaufmann 2007)

Lebanon, like Northern Ireland, was carved out of a larger entity (Greater Syria being the analogue of Ireland) and was intended to be a Christian-majority state. Over time, however, Christian emigration and higher Muslim fertility altered the population balance to the point where Christians are now an acknowledged minority. This proved so contentious that no census has taken place in the country since 1932. The arrival of large numbers of Palestinian Muslim refugees from Israel after wars in 1948-9, 1967 and 1973 further upset the finely balanced demographic picture, leading to instability. The Lebanese Civil War of 1975-1990 was not a purely ethnic affair, but much of the fighting broke down along ethnic lines. Even so, the use of ethnic community guarantees (such as a presidency which rotates between Christian and Muslim) and the ban on the census provided a form of insulation from demographic change which may have benefited the country since the end of the Civil War. The

multiplicity of groups: Christian, Druze, Shia, Sunni, also helps to limit binary polarisation, in contrast to Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka and other highly divided conflict areas. These factors did not, however, prevent the outbreak of conflict in 2006, which threatened to degenerate into renewed civil war.

Across Lebanon's southern border, in Israel-Palestine, one can find some of the highest levels of fertility ever recorded in modern societies. In 1998, Palestinian women in Gaza had a fertility rate of 7.41 children per woman. Ultra Orthodox Jewish fertility in Israel was similar. Demographer Philippe Fargues convincingly argues that ethnic conflict, along with unemployment, is an important factor in propping up fertility rates among relatively well-educated Jewish and Palestinian women in Israel-Palestine. (Fargues 2000) Overall, Arabs are increasing as a proportion of the population of both Israel-Palestine and Israel proper. The withdrawal of Israel from settlements in Gaza is viewed as part of a wider policy of demographic retrenchment since Jews will be a minority in greater Israel-Palestine within a decade.

In the former Yugoslavia, differential rates of ethnic population growth likewise form an important conditioning factor behind the conflict. In the first Yugoslav war (1992-4), Slack and Doyon discovered that between 1961 and 1991, the proportion of Muslims increased from just over 25 percent to almost 45 percent of Bosnia's population while Serbs dropped from 43 to 32 percent of the total. Part of this change had to do with census terminology and identity-switching, but much could be explained by a younger Bosnian Muslim age structure and higher fertility, combined with Bosnian Serb outmigration. Districts (opstinas) where ethnic change was most rapid tended to be hit hardest by anti-Muslim violence during the 1992-4 war. Serbs in areas of Bosnia with comfortable Serb majorities and small Muslim

minorities were much less active in aiding the ethnic cleansing campaign. (Slack and Doyon 2001)

Similar dynamics were at play in Kosovo several years later. Between 1945 and 1961, Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo had roughly similar rates of population growth. However, between 1961 and 1991 the proportion of Serbs dropped from 23.6 percent to just 9.9 percent due to higher Albanian fertility and further Serb outmigration. Milosevic's campaign of anti-Albanian ethnic cleansing in 1999 must be traced to his expansionist 'Greater Serbia' nationalist ideology. Even so, the decline of the Serb population had given rise to an alarmist discourse among local Serbs in Kosovo which fed into the conflict. (Toft 2002: 81)

In Asia, a prominent example of immigration-driven ethnic change is taking place in the northeastern Indian state of Assam. A Hindu-majority tongue of Indian territory which extends into 99 percent Muslim Bangladesh, Assam has long been host to large-scale illegal (but peaceful) Bengali immigration. Muslims grew at a rate of between 30 and 50 percent in the period 1971 to 1991. They now comprise over 30 percent of Assam's population and are 'believed to control the electoral verdict in 60 of Assam's 126 Assembly constituencies'. Numerous battles have taken place over whether large numbers of Muslims have the legal status necessary to add their name to the electoral rolls. (Hussain 2005) The growth of the Muslim population has been the catalyst for violent Assamese attacks against unarmed Bengali workers since the 1980s and an Assamese political movement has long demanded the deportation of illegal Bengali immigrants. (Wiener 1983) This conflict is regional, but on the wider Indian level, the growth of the Muslim population in India through higher fertility and an (often exaggerated) degree of illegal immigration has been a foil for the Hindu nationalism of the BJP party and its quasi-paramilitary sister association, the RSS.

The Muslim population's fertility advantage over Hindus in India as a whole was 10 percent at partition in 1947, but now stands at 25-35 percent. Only a fraction of this gap can be explained by relative Muslim poverty. Muslims grew from roughly 8 percent of the Indian total in 1947 to 14 percent today, and are projected to rise to 17 percent by 2050 and 19 percent by 2100. These are not staggering numbers, yet have proven useful tinder for Hindu nationalists and sparked sporadic violent reprisals against Indian Muslims. (Bhat and Xavier 2005: 399)

We see similar constellations at work in sub-Saharan Africa, despite the greater fluidity of ethnic boundaries as compared to the European, Middle Eastern and Asian cases reviewed thus far. A more fierce competition for resources, as well as weaker states and national identities may account for higher levels of ethnic violence in this region. (Fearon and Laitin 2003) Violence is often sparked by intra-national migration between regions (coupled with international flows) which was often first encouraged by colonial rulers seeking labour to open up new agricultural lands in sparsely settled areas. Yet these lands lay in other tribes' 'traditional' territory - here we bracket the question of ethnic memory and invention of tradition - and hence carried the seeds for conflict. Migrations often continued or intensified after independence. In Côte D'Ivoire, northern ethnic settlers (Dioula, Senoufo, Malinké) who initially were encouraged by the French to move South in the colonial period, continued to migrate after independence. The tribal-territorial nature of many African states meant that such migrations crossed ethnic boundaries, and could form the basis for populist anti-migrant campaigns of 'autochthonous' rights. In Côte D'Ivoire, many northern migrants originate from areas in neighbouring countries, to the point where some 26 percent of Côte D'Ivoire's population is comprised of non-nationals. 'Northern populations, such as the Malinké, Senoufo, and Dioula,' writes Marshall-

Fratani, 'have migrated massively south, becoming in some cases the dominant population in southern towns'. In 1998-99, Laurent Ggabo, a southern political entrepreneur, mobilised his FPI party on a violently anti-immigrant, pro-'autochthon' ticket, and his election in 2000 was marked by outbreaks of anti-northerner paramilitary violence which became a marked feature of the electoral landscape in this once-peaceful society. (Marshall-Fratani 2006) In Uganda, migration-linked violence is localised in the southwestern Kibaale district, where the considerable movement of ethnic Bakiga into Bunyoro ethnic territory lies behind violent 'autochthonous' politics there. (Green 2008) The Kenyan electoral violence of January 2008 fed on anti-Kikuyu nativist feeling whose roots reach back to postcolonial Kikuyu settlement of the traditionally Maasai/Kalenjin Rift Valley province. More recently, anti-immigrant violence in South Africa has been linked to large scale international migration from neighbouring Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Though African ethnic identities like Kikuyu, Wolof or southern Ivoirian are known to have relatively fluid boundaries and to grow through assimilation, there is a limit to their short-run fluidity and they function within a tense, resource-constrained, weak-state environment.² All told, ethnic demographic change can set the stage for ethnic conflict if ethnic boundaries are rigid or the politico-economic environment is unstable.

Immigration-Driven Ethnic change within Europe and its Settler Societies

The co-existence of different locations on the curve of demographic transition between the West (including Japan and Russia), Asia and the developing world is set

² For more on the fluidity of African ethnic boundaries, see (Posner 2005).

to realign the globe's geopolitical axis. Yet inter-national and inter-civilisational differences are a manifestation of a deeper process which can also be observed *within* nations. In demography, mathematical formulas automatically connect indicators like fertility, mortality, sex ratio and migration with age structure. If you know a population's demographic indicators, you can deduce how the age structure (or population pyramid) will shift over time. We know that fertility differences between developing and developed nations are leading to growth in the share of the world's population that is of non-western origin. From this, we can deduce that the growing non-European population will be younger, gradually displacing a European-origin population that is shrinking and aging.

Just as certain nations and regions' share of the world's population will change radically by 2050, so too will the ethnic composition of the nations of the world. The growing proportion of native-stock elderly people will be accompanied by a rise in ethnic minority younger people. In the United States, for instance, the population in 1960 essentially consisted of a traditional African-American minority of 12 percent and a white majority of almost 90 percent. Today, those of non-Hispanic white origin comprise just two-thirds of the total while Hispanics, at 14 percent of the population, have overtaken African-Americans as the largest minority. In 2050, the US Census Bureau projects that nonwhites (including Hispanics) will comprise half the population, hence the well-accepted view that the 'browning of America' is an unalterable reality. These changes are especially pronounced in gateway immigration states like California, Florida, Illinois and New York. Consider the state of California: in 1960 it was about 85-90 percent white, roughly the same percentage as in the 1880s when ugly race riots put a stop to Chinese immigration. In 2006, less than fifty years

later, the state's population was just 44 percent white. (United States Census Bureau 2006)

The American example illustrates how the sharp end of demographically-driven social change is first experienced in the public schools and the maternity wards of hospitals because new populations are often younger and more fertile than the aging native population. Already, the national population aged 5 and under is about ten percentage points less white (57 percent) than the total, and is projected to fall below 50 percent by 2025. These – less future immigrants – are the Americans of tomorrow. (United States Census Bureau 2007)

Likewise, in Britain in the 2001 census, 96 percent of those over fifty are white, but this proportion falls to 85 percent for those aged under 5. (Office of National Statistics 2001) In Austria in the same year, Muslims comprised over 8 percent of those under 10 years of age but barely 1 percent of the 50+ population. This multiplier of approximately 8:1 in Islamic strength between younger and older age brackets has held roughly constant across the 1981, 1991 and 2001 censuses. (Goujon et al. 2006) A combination of immigration and fertility is responsible for this pattern.

What of the wider European ethnic panorama? British demographer David Coleman has attempted to summarise projections from national statistics agencies which examine the size of the population of ‘foreign’ ethnic origin (whether European or non-European) for seven major countries in northwestern Europe.³ This is an exceptionally tricky task since most European countries do not collect data on ethnicity and religion, only place of birth and parents’ place of birth. In addition, Coleman has taken care to provide cautious estimates due to the contentiousness of

³ Cases analysed are Austria, England and Wales, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

the subject matter. (Interview with David Coleman, September 2007) With these caveats in mind, Coleman finds that the proportion of foreign origin in the period 2000-2004 ranges from a low of 7.5 percent in Norway to a high of 17.5 percent in the Netherlands. Roughly half of those of foreign origin are from another European country. Again, there is a good deal of variation, with the non-European population largest in Britain and Holland (between 8 and 9 percent) and lowest in Norway (3.4 percent) and Austria (4 percent). In France, the proportion of non-European descent is arguably the highest in Europe, at around 10 percent. (Coleman 2006)

On the one hand, virtually all those of foreign origin, regardless of race, are not members of the dominant ethnic group, and hence would increase the degree of dissonance between ethnic and political boundaries. European foreign populations, for instance, have been the bugbear of xenophobic movements in the early twentieth century in Austria and Germany (East Europeans and Jews), the United States (Southern and Eastern Europeans), Switzerland (Italians) and Britain (Irish and Jews). The premise of nationalism – especially in its Herderian, ‘ethnic nationalist’ mode – is to align ethnic and political boundaries, hence all foreigners, regardless of appearance or religion, would present a problem. (Kohn 1994; Smith 1991) On the other hand, European immigrants often share the appearance and religion of the dominant ethnic group, so would be expected to collide less with the wider racial or civilisational identity of members of the ethnic majority. They may also be viewed as potentially assimilable in a way that non-Europeans are not, though it must be stressed that there are strong local exceptions to this rule, as with Albanian immigrants to Italy or Spanish migrants to Catalonia, who are often resented more than North African Muslim immigrants for historical reasons.

Coleman usefully divides his projections into 'western' and 'non-western' totals, largely coterminous with 'white' and 'nonwhite'. Based on this categorisation, he finds that the proportion of non-European origin in 2050 will range from a low of 5.1 percent in Austria to a high of 24.5 percent in Britain, with many countries in the 10-15 percent range. (Coleman 2006: 414) There are several reasons to treat the non-UK projections as highly conservative. Many of the projections cited by Coleman outside the UK assume that the third generation is no longer of foreign origin and has been absorbed by the ethnic majority, which greatly skews subsequent projections. These projections also assume no increase in immigration as a result of an aging population.

What cannot be doubted is that national trends are magnified for urban areas in immigrant-receiving regions. In Amsterdam in 2004, for instance, 49 percent of the city's 739,000 people were of non-Dutch ethnic origin (mainly of Antillean, Turkish and Moroccan descent), a majority among the under-25 population. This in a country with less than 9 percent of non-European origin. (Alexander 2007: 166) In England in 2001, 35 of 239 census districts had at least one minority white ward in the 2001 census. At the city level, Leicester is expected to become the first minority white city in Britain by 2010, with the much larger Birmingham following suit by 2027. (Simpson 2007; *Guardian*, 'Side by Side', 1 January 2001) Often the urban effect is multiplied by the younger age structure of minority populations. For instance, 1 in 5 UK births is to a foreign-born mother (itself more than twice the 8 percent of foreign birth in the total UK population), but in Greater London, the proportion is 1 in 2. (Office of National Statistics 2006) Italy's foreign-born population stood at little over

5 percent in 2004, yet in Rome, a study by La Sapienza University in that year found that 15 percent of mothers giving birth were of wholly or partly foreign origin.⁴

The ethnic population wave takes much longer to reach political institutions since voters and those who run for office tend to be older and require the sense of familiarity with the new society that often only comes from native birth or several generations' residence. On the other hand, if immigrant groups concentrate locally, as with Cubans in Miami or the Irish in Boston, they can rapidly come to dominate municipal or even state offices. Sometimes electoral dynamics favour immigrant voters. Hispanics, for instance, are viewed as a potential swing vote in the United States, since 40 percent voted Republican in 2004. (Guth et al. 2005) They are a strong presence in several large, hotly-contested states like California, so can deliver a significant number of electoral college votes in the state by state, 'winner-take-all' system. This means that the elites of both parties make great efforts to win Hispanic support and back Hispanic policy concerns (such as an amnesty for illegal immigrants) even when this is opposed by the native-born black and white grassroots of both parties. In countries with an electoral system based on proportional representation (the majority of European democracies), numbers translate directly into political influence, and a minority can jockey for position in coalition politics.

With regard to the demographic processes which are changing Europe, David Coleman recently remarked:

'The processes described and projected here resulting from low fertility combined with high immigration, are significant because they are changing the composition of national populations and thereby the culture, physical

⁴ See http://www.wantedinrome.com/news/news.php?id_n=2396.

appearance, social experiences, and self-perceived identity of the inhabitants of European nations.' (Coleman 2006: 402-3)

Will these changes lead to ethnic violence in western Europe and North America along the lines of what has taken place in the former Yugoslavia, Ivory Coast, Assam or Lebanon? Political and economic environments, unlike sub-Saharan Africa, are stable. Therefore, much depends on the relative fluidity of ethnic boundaries.

It is noteworthy that the immigration of non-Europeans has not resulted in the nations of the West bathing in British anti-immigration MP Enoch Powell's dystopic 'Rivers of Blood', largely avoiding serious ethnic conflict between natives and immigrants. This could not always have been predicted. In California in the 1880s, a Chinese population of less than ten percent was enough to serve as the foil for anti-Chinese pogroms and rioting. (Sandmeyer 1939) In the northeastern US, anti-Catholic violence was common until the early twentieth century. (Horowitz 2001) The arrival of non-Europeans to Europe after 1950 sparked native responses early on, as with the 1958 Notting Hill riots, directed against West Indians in London. However, mi1a(o)5.st.3(9sequ-0.0007)5.1(-

western Europe today, whose post-1985 rise followed an impressive rise in the non-European foreign-born population since the 1950s. That said, the precise timing of anti-immigration politics cannot merely be read off the quantitative trend in immigration. There is frequently a lag period or tipping point before a response emerges, and the far right can perform well even in the absence of demographic change, as in Eastern Europe after 1989. (Norris 2005)

The waning of systematic anti-immigrant violence in the West is connected to the more robust egalitarian individualism which spread widely in the 1960s as part of a wave of liberal attitude change. Overtly racist attitudes became less prevalent and the acceptance of inter-racial marriage increased. Identities among members of dominant majorities shifted somewhat, from national identity to lifestyle subcultures. The increasingly fragmented, 'loose-bounded' nature of society helped to soften or even dissolve many ethnic boundaries. (Kaufmann 2004b: 232-43) Liberalism and equality therefore exert double-edged effects. On the one hand, they open states to demographic change and empower demographic forces, but on the other hand, they promote an individualism and cultural toleration which erodes the rigidity of ethnic boundaries. The ultimate question therefore is whether the ethnic change introduced by immigration and fertility differences can be dissipated rapidly enough by assimilation and the blurring of ethnic boundaries.

The quick jump in inter-racial marriage in the West is remarkable. There are now almost as many babies born in the UK to one black Caribbean and one white parent as there are to two black Caribbean parents. In the United States, a third of Hispanic Americans, half of Asians and even ten percent of African-Americans marry out. By contrast, in 1960, less than 0.2 percent of American marriages were interracial. (Kaufmann 2004b: 238) Barry Edmonston claims that mixed-race

Americans will make up 20 percent of the total in 2050, and David Coleman adds that the largest racial category in the UK in 2100 will be mixed race. (Edmonston and Smith 1997; Coleman 2005)

Minority Resistance to Assimilation

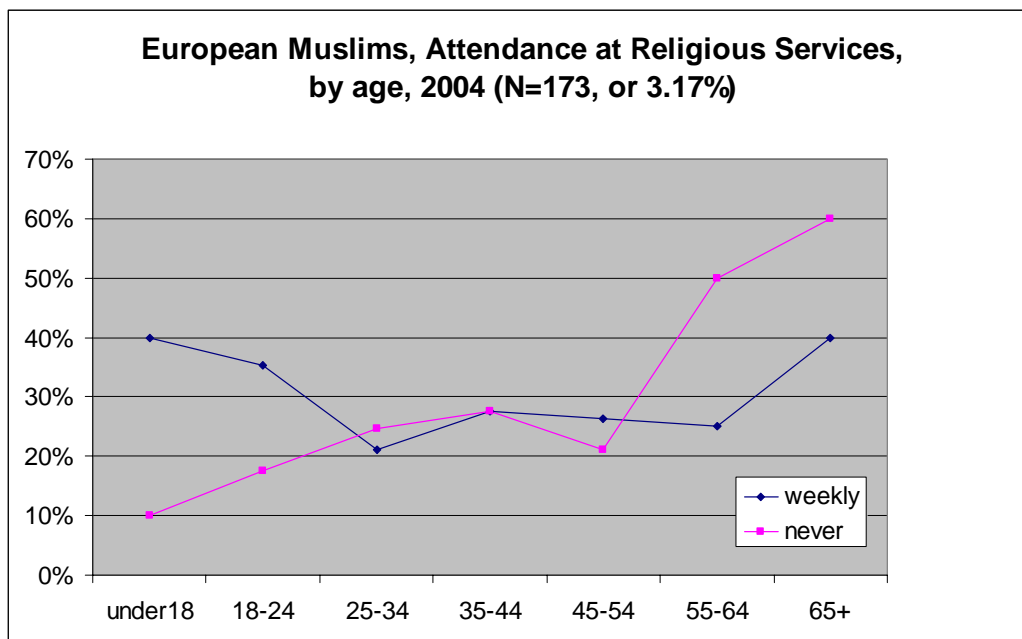
These statistics are encouraging, but fail to consider the possibility that certain groups may choose not to accept the offer of assimilation. The great British-Jewish emigré sociologist Ernest Gellner developed a theory of nationalism which foresaw the mass assimilation of diverse populations into the official culture of the new nations of post-1789 Europe. He did, however, note the possibility of some groups remaining unassimilated due to 'counter-entropic' traits. These are characteristics which allow ethnic groups to resist assimilation into a dominant culture. Gellner viewed religion as the counter-entropic trait *par excellence*. (Gellner 1983) In the absence of separate political structures or persecution, a group's best chance of survival comes from religion. The Jews of central Europe or the Armenian diaspora are two cases in point. A separate religion and set of religious institutions helped to maintain community distinctiveness. Today, Gellner's observations would apply to ultra Orthodox Jews, and also to a much larger population, that of European Muslims.

Muslims in Europe

Data from both the European Values Survey (2000) and European Social Survey (2004) confirm that young Muslims across Europe are as religious as their parents and grandparents. (See figure 2) Figure 3, based on ethnic minority surveys,

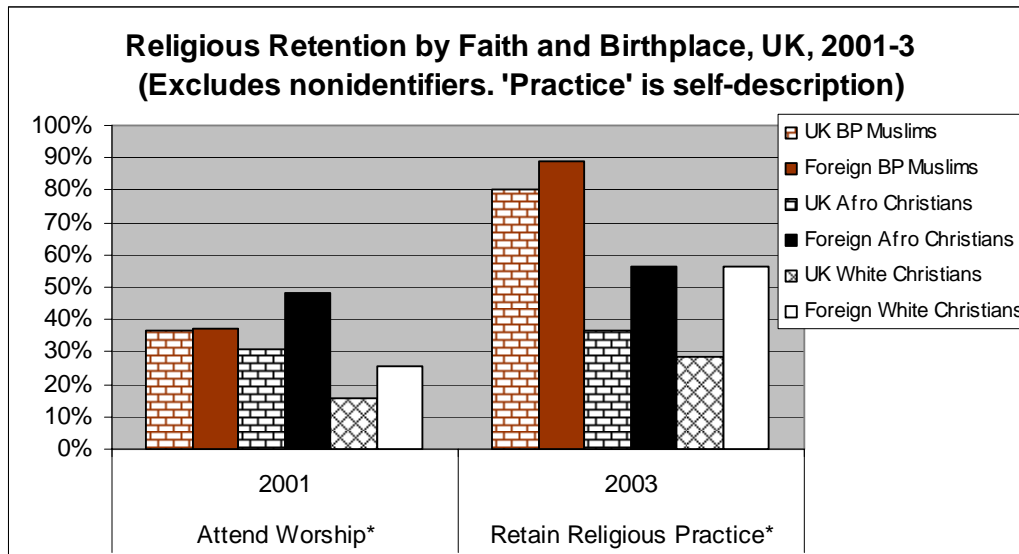
shows that there is little or no decline in religious observance between immigrant (solid bar) and British-born (bricked bar) Muslims. The reverse seems true of East European and Afro-Caribbean Christians, who experience high secularisation between the first and second generation. Ethnic minority surveys from Holland show similar patterns, this time among largely North African and Turkish (rather than Indian subcontinental) Dutch Muslims. (Van Tubergen 2006)

Figure 2.



Source: European Social Survey 2004. N.B. Muslims comprise just over 3 percent of the sample, in this instance drawn from ten countries: Holland, Britain, Ireland, France, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Belgium, Spain.

Figure 3.

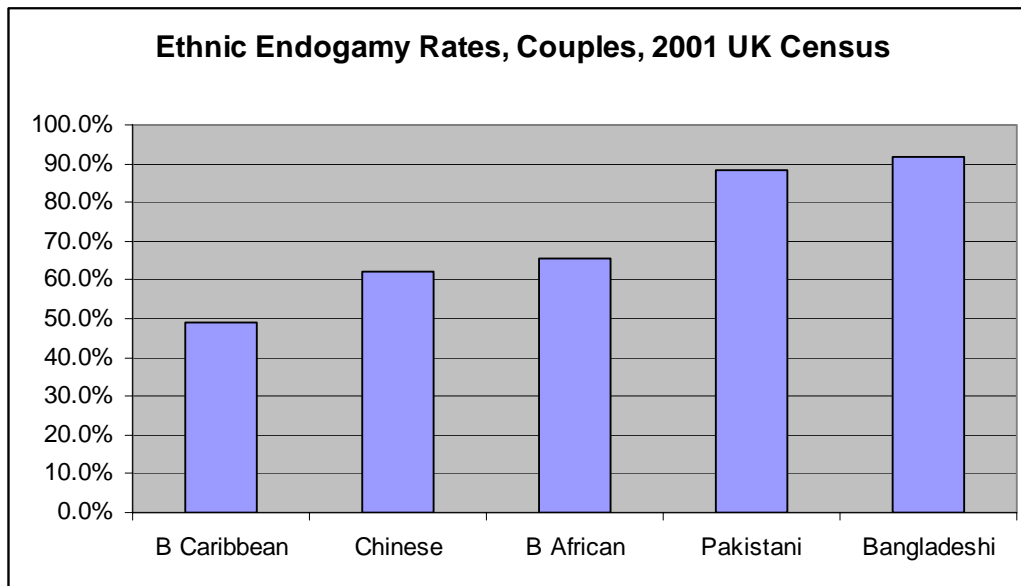


Sources: (Office for National Statistics and Home Office 2005; Home Office 2003)
 Note that 'BP' designates Bangladeshi and Pakistani, and 'Afro' refers to African and Caribbean.

The second generation appears to be holding the line against assimilation in other ways. Consider the high endogamy rates of Muslim ethnic groups (i.e. Bangladeshi, Pakistani) in the UK. (See figure 4) Inter-marriage between Muslims and non-Muslims in Britain remains rare - less than 10 percent of couples which include a Muslim are religiously mixed, though it should be noted that Sikhs and Hindus (both from the Indian subcontinent) have similar endogamy rates. (Office for National Statistics 2001) This is reinforced by the Islamic practice of returning to the home country (i.e. Pakistan, Bangladesh, Turkey, Morocco) to find a spouse. Often such marriages are arranged by the family. These statistics on intermarriage and secularisation contrast sharply with the far more assimilationist behaviour of blacks and East Asians in Holland and Britain. Black Africans, for instance, are a relatively recent, heavily foreign-born group, yet, already, 1 in 3 couples involving a Black African is a mixed marriage (largely with white British Christians). Thus we seem to have two paths emerging in Europe: an assimilationist path for blacks and East Asians, and an ethnic retention path for most Muslim ethnic groups (as well as Sikhs

and possibly Hindus), and one cannot simply assume that all groups will converge toward assimilation. Where reinforced by residential segregation and 'parallel communities', the lack of inter-group contact can lead to alienation and ethnic strife, as with the 2001 Mill Town Riots in northern England. (Cantle 2001): 9)

Figure 4.



Source: ONS Longitudinal Survey (UK 2001 Census). N = 3558 B Caribbean, 2061 Chinese, 2710 B African, 8798 Pakistani, 3298 Bangladeshi.

Conclusion

This paper argues that modernity tends to bring forth greater ethno-demographic conflict. This is so for two reasons. The first is socio-political: notably the growth of ethnic and national consciousness through reflexivity and the demographic majoritarianism flowing from ideas of popular sovereignty. The second source of change, which is accelerating and will crest during the twenty-first century, is demographic. It involves a major redistribution of population power to the Global South, and, within developed countries, increasingly rapid change in nations' ethnic

composition, facilitated by demographic liberalism and improved global communications.

Will differential ethnic population growth in the West cause increasing ethnic conflict? In the past, differential ethnic population growth has been linked to conflict, but the effects have been particularly pronounced in situations where ethnic boundaries are tight and/or politico-economic environments unstable. In the West, modernity has unfolded in a culturally liberal manner since 1945, especially since the 1960s, thereby loosening ethnic boundaries among dominant and minority groups. Meanwhile, states are strong and economies robust. However, it takes two to tango, and while black, Latin American and East Asian ethnic minorities appear to be intermarrying and assimilating quite rapidly in the West, this does not appear to be true of Muslim ethnic groups and some South Asian non-Muslim groups. Muslim ethnic groups show strong religious retention, low rates of intermarriage and high population growth in Europe. Thus Muslim ethnies' distinct religious identity may serve as a Gellnerian 'counter-entropic' device which helps to safeguard the group from the pressures of assimilation.

Should this pattern continue, we may well see the emergence of more ethnic conflict in Europe between dominant ethnies and Muslim minorities, especially if low levels of intermarriage are accompanied by residential - and hence educational - segregation. That said, some intermarriage is taking place and we have as yet no sense of how the Muslim third generation will self-identify. In the United States, inter-faith boundaries between Catholics, Protestants and Jews only began to seriously erode in the 1960s, some three to six generations after the first major non-Protestant migrations. All of which should serve to remind us that there is no predetermined rule governing the tightness of ethnic boundaries. Consequently, we cannot easily predict

whether the inevitable, accelerating ethno-demographic energies of the twenty-first century will fuel conflict or be successfully dissipated.

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