



Is Trump the First “European-conservative” American Presidential Candidate?

Ever since Donald Trump’s rise to 2016-contender prominence, the rap on him, and perhaps part of his broad appeal, has been that he’s not a conservative. And he’s not — he’s a nationalistic populist. Yet there’s another way to understand The Donald’s professed politics: as that of the first prominent “European-conservative” American presidential candidate. He’s not so much America’s next Ronald Reagan or Barry Goldwater, but her first Marine Le Pen.



A prerequisite for grasping this is understanding the true natures of liberalism and conservatism. While many have their own definitions of the latter — and will stubbornly insist they’re correct — the truth is that both political terms are provisional, meaning different things in different times and places. The term “conservative” in the 1970s referred to a communist in the USSR and someone staunchly anti-communist in the US; and a European conservative today, such as Britain’s David Cameron, is well to the “left” of our conservatives. Many other examples could be provided, but the point is this: liberalism and conservatism are [not ideologies as much processes](#). Liberalism is the process of inexorably trying to change the status quo; conservatism is the process of trying to preserve the status quo. Thus, the actual positions the terms are seen as representing will vary depending on the status quo in question.

And when analyzing the Trump phenomenon, it’s clear that it’s roughly the same one evident in much of the West, the one fueling the fortunes of Le Pen in France, the Netherlands’ Geert Wilders (who has endorsed Trump), Britain’s Nigel Farage and Sweden’s Jimmie Åkesson. He also bears much in common with those figures.

Consider the qualities these European politicians share: they’re socially quite liberal. Their views on abortion range from indifference to tolerance to mild skepticism, on faux marriage they range from mild opposition to acceptance. In general, they say as little about these matters as they can and are willing to play to their audience. But then there’s their real passion, about which they generally seem sincere: nationalism, limiting immigration, fighting Muslim terrorism and stopping Islamization. Sound at all familiar?

It’s also common (though not universal) among such figures to talk about preserving their nation’s “Christian heritage.” Now, it’s unimaginable that Le Pen and Wilders spend much time at an altar rail, and were Christian piety the order of the day in Western Europe, it would be easy to see them taking up the cudgels for secularism. But with already sclerotic Christian culture further threatened by a confluence of secularization and Islamization — and with Muslim chauvinists providing stark reminders of a very unappealing alternative — they’re inspired to become Crusaders protecting their nation’s Christian veneer.



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Likewise, Trump cannot be mistaken for a desert mystic; he [stated](#) last summer that he never sought forgiveness from God (doing so is a Christian tenet), and hasn't demonstrated much acquaintance with the faith. Yet he has also said he's proud to be a Presbyterian, sometimes attends church and has bemoaned how Christianity is under attack in America. And whether you believe this is piety or posturing, for certain is this: it's no surprise coming from an apparent nationalist. For being so means defending your nation's culture, as it is, which in the West includes superficial Christianity. It means wanting to see church steeples and not minarets, crosses and not the star and crescent, and to hear church bells and not the Adhan — even if you talk more about the Easter Bunny than Jesus.

So what accounts for the popularity in the U.S. of a "European conservative"? The same things accounting for it in across the pond. First, like Western Europe, we're beset by a political establishment that encourages a culture-rending invasion by unassimilable peoples. And it's just as with a "hot" invasion: all other problems are put on the back burner when barbarians are at the gate. Have you ever seen a guy wringing his hands about his daughter's sleazy boyfriend while home invaders are busting down his door?

This helps explain why Trump is attracting support from groups most wouldn't expect, such as [evangelicals](#). Some find it inexplicable, but I think these believers' attitude was reflected well by a devout Catholic man I know — a truly faithful fellow — who said some years back that he considered immigration an *even bigger issue than abortion*. His point was that all else is for naught if you're subjected to demographic genocide and lose your nation.

Then there's the second reason a European conservative would play well today: the US is becoming more like Europe. A not widely understood phenomenon is that the positions we generally associate with traditional American "conservatism" correlate with Christian belief. This is why church attendance is one of the best predictors of voting habits. Consider: in socialistic Western Europe, more than 50 percent of the population [identifies](#) as "irreligious." Not surprisingly, this reaches a Richard Dawkins Award high in what's perhaps the world's most "liberal" country, Sweden, where *76 percent* of the citizenry identifies as "not religious" or "atheist" (and how many of the rest are Muslim?). And in once-Marxist, now-fascist China, 90 percent thus label themselves.

The US isn't yet that far gone, but we're on the same road. According to [Pew Research Center](#), Americans identifying as Christian declined from 78.4 percent to 70.6 percent of the population in just 7 years (2007 to 2014), and the religiously "unaffiliated" now account for almost a quarter of our nation. This just reflects the increasingly secular nature of succeeding generations: Among those born 1928 through 1945, 85 percent identify as Christian. But there is a steady degeneration of the generations, with only 56 percent of "Younger Millennials" (born '90 through '96) labeling themselves so.

Yet even this paints too optimistic a picture. As [this](#) must-read Barna Group research company study found in 2002 already, only 22 percent of adults believed in Absolute Moral Truth while 64 percent said matters were "always relative to the person and their [sic] situation." And they were practically the "wise elders": 83 percent of the teenagers subscribed to relativism — which is the antithesis of Christian belief — and only *6 percent* believed in Truth.

And as Barna head George Barna put it, "[T]he alarmingly fast decline of moral foundations among our young people has culminated in a one-word worldview: 'whatever.' The result is a mentality that esteems pluralism, relativism, tolerance, and diversity without critical reflection of the implications of particular views and actions." Put simply and [as I've explained many times](#), the notion that there is no Truth means that, in essence, there are no moral rules governing man. It is then that everything boils



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down to occultist Aleister Crowley's maxim, "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law."

Thus does lacking the yardstick of Truth lead to, as Barna also found, people making decisions based on what "feels right." And now we see the rise of relativistic moderns to whom nationalism and their own culture feel right, which is certainly preferable to the dominance of relativistic moderns to whom internationalism and multiculturalism feel right. Absent acquaintance with and adherence to Truth, however, a civilization will always descend into some kind of lie. So the most we can perhaps hope for is that, to quote Yogi Berra, we won't one day have to say, "I think I made the wrong mistake."

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