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DOUGLAS MURRAY
THE STRANGE MADNESS OF EUROPE

INTRODUCTION:	Welcome to *Uncommon Knowledge*. I'm Peter Robinson.
	Associate Editor of the *Spectator*, Douglas Murray writes for a number of publications, including the *Wall Street Journal*. Mr. Murray is the author of a number of books, including *The Strange Death of Europe*, which appeared in 2017, and *The Madness of Crowds: Gender, Race, and Identity*, which will appear this September.
	Douglas Murray, welcome.
	The Strange Death of Europe: Europe is committing suicide. Or at least its leaders have decided to commit suicide. Whether the European people choose to go along with this is, naturally, another matter."
	The book appeared in 2017. We'll return to this, but briefly, two years later *do* the European people appear to be going along with it?

SEGMENT ONE: The argument

First, the basic or principal argument in *The Strange Death of Europe*.

You're not concerned with some temporary European malaise or mere questions of slow economic growth. Again, to quote you:

"Europe today has little desire to reproduce itself, fight for itself or even take its own side in an argument. . . . By the end of the lifespans of most people currently alive, Europe will not be Europe and the peoples of Europe will have lost the only place in the world we had to call home."

When you use the term "death"—*The Strange Death of Europe*—you're speaking literally. You argue that as a historic and cultural entity, Europe will very soon cease to exist. Correct?

This has come about "because of two simultaneous concatenations from which it is now all but impossible to recover. The first is the mass movement of peoples into Europe."

Explain.

A few figures from the book:

> Item: By 2015 more British Muslims were fighting for Isis than for the British armed forces.

> Item: In 2016 the most popular boy's name in England and Wales: Mohammed.

> Item: [B]y the middle of this century a majority of Austrians under the age of 15 will be Muslims….

Am I right that just a generation or so ago every one of those developments would have been unthinkable?

SEGMENT
ONE, CONT'D: The second "concatenation"—again, quoting *The Strange Death of Europe:*

       "At the same time Europe has lost faith in its beliefs, traditions and legitimacy . . . Europe is now deeply weighed down with guilt for its past. . .. And there is also the problem . . . of an existential tiredness and a feeling that perhaps for Europe the story has run out and a new story must be allowed to begin."

       Once again, explain.

       "The fact that a society should feel like it has run out of steam at precisely the moment when a new society has begun to move in cannot help but lead to vast, epochal changes."

       What is the parallel here? An exhausted, politically fractious fifth-century Rome, unable to defend itself against the barbarian invasions?

SEGMENT TWO: The madness of crowds: gays and women

This brings us to your new book, *The Madness of Crowds: Gender, Race and Identity*. It's not just that the West is exhausted. It's that the West had lost its mind:

"We are going through a great derangement. . .. People are behaving in ways that are increasingly irrational, feverish, herd-like and simply unpleasant."

Explain.

You examine the identity politics of gays, women, racial minorities, and trans.

Gays

The Madness of Crowds: "The single factor that has most clearly helped to change public opinion about homosexuality in the West has been the decision that homosexuality is in fact a 'hardware' rather than a 'software' issue."

Which means what? And do we know that? Are there unambiguous medical or scientific findings that prove it?

Again, *The Madness of Crowds*: "LGBT is now one of the groupings which mainstream politicians routinely speak about . . . as if they actually exist like a racial or religious community. It is a form of absurdity. For even on its own terms this composition is wildly unsustainable and contradictory."

Douglas?

Women

You discuss Stephen Pinker's 2002 book *The Blank Slate*, pointing out that Pinker notes any number of undoubted differences between men and women, including systematic differences between male and female brains. You quote Pinker: "Things are not looking good for the theory that boys and girls are born identical except for their genitalia."

And then Douglas Murray replies: "Except that less than two decades later they are. . . .. Since Pinker wrote *The Blank Slate* our societies have doubled down on the delusion that biological difference . . . can be pushed away, denied, or ignored."

How did this happen?

The Madness of Crowds: Whereas "gay campaigners . . . persuaded the world that homosexuality was a hardware issue . . . the direction of travel for women simultaneously went in exactly the opposite direction."

Explain.

The Madness of Crowds: "We are being not just asked but expected to radically alter our lives and societies on the basis of claims that our instincts all tell us cannot possibly be true."

"Asked" and "expected" by whom?

The madness of crowds: race and trans

Race

You discuss the dream of Martin Luther King Jr., that his children would "one day live in a nation where they will be judged not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

And then you write: "In recent years an insidious current has developed that has chosen to reject Dr. King's dream. . .. It has decided that skin color is everything. . .. . At the very moment when the issue of race might at long last have been put to rest, they have decided once again to make it the most important issue of all."

Explain.

"Part of the madness of all this is that the desirable destination had been so nearly reached."

Once again, how could this have happened?

Trans

Tell the story of the Belgian transsexual Nathan Verhulst.

The Madness of Crowds: "It is not hard to imagine future generations reading such a story in a spirit of amazement. 'So the Belgian health service tried to turn a woman into a man, failed and then killed her?'"

SEGMENT
THREE, CONT'D: Again, *The Madness of Crowds*: "The advocates of social justice [and] identity politics . . . suggest that we live in societies which are racist, sexist, homophobic and transphobic. They suggest that . . . if we can . . . unweave [this web], we can then finally unlock the interlocking oppressions of our time. . .. [But] the interlocking oppressions do not all lock neatly together, but grind tediously and noisily . . . against each other and within themselves."

Explain.

One final time, *The Madness of Crowds*: "'Compared to what?' When people attempt to sum up our societies today as monstrous, racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic patriarchies, the question needs to be asked."

Compared to Muslim societies?

"Mohammed" is the most popular boy's name in Britain. In France, the Muslim population now numbers some five to six million. When Muslims look at the identity politics of gays, women, and trans, what must they suppose? That Europe is not only exhausted but decadent?

SEGMENT FOUR: What's happening now

Nation states

Back to *The Strange Death of Europe*: "From the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 up to the late twentieth century the nation-state . . . had generally been regarded not only as the best guarantor of constitutional order and liberal rights but [also as] the ultimate guarantor of peace. Yet this certainty [has] also eroded. Central European figures like Chancellor Kohl of Germany in 1996 insisted that 'The nation-state . . . cannot solve the great problems of the twenty-first century.'"

Explain Brexit and the European elections of this past May.

Political correctness

The Strange Death of Europe: "The criticism, thought and discussion [about immigration] ought to have been boundless. Looking back, it is remarkable how restricted we made our discussion even whilst we opened our home to the world."

The academic and writer Sir Roger Scruton, arguably the most important and subtle philosopher of conservatism since Edmund Burke. Tell us what happened to Sir Roger this past spring.

[[Scruton agreed to be interviewed by George Eaton of the *New Statesman*. "Eaton declared on Twitter that 'the government adviser and philosopher Roger Scruton has made a series of outrageous remarks' and included a link to the interview. . . .. Scruton was alleged to have talked outrageously about 'Hungarian Jews.' He was alleged to have been racist about 'the Chinese.' He was alleged to have described 'Islamophobia' as 'a propaganda word invited by the Muslim brotherhood in order to stop discussion of a major issue.'"]]

SEGMENT
FOUR, CONT'D: Needless to say, prominent Conservatives in the
government of Prime Minister Teresa May instantly rose to
Scruton's defense?

Politics

The *Strange Death of Europe*: "It would seem far more likely
that rather than massive U-turns occurring, politics across
Europe will instead continue in the coming decades much
as it was up until now. . .. An ever-larger number of people
who are themselves of immigrant background will be ever
less likely to support any political party proposing limits on
immigration."

We've already discussed the recent European elections, but
you're suggesting there's a kind of tipping point. I've heard
it said that Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the British Labor
Party, indulges in anti-Semitism is that he wants to lock up
the Muslim vote. The Muslim population of Europe is
already 26 million. What's that? Seven or eight times the
Jewish population?

Poland, Hungary. They've resisted Muslim immigration.
Does that give them greater degrees of freedom? The
governments of Poland and Hungary receive constant
castigation in Western Europe. But is Eastern Europe likely
to prove the best hope for the preservation of a distinctly
European culture?

SEGMENT FIVE: Last questions

Pope Benedict XVI in 2006 at the University of
Regensburg, Germany. The Pope discusses the merging of
Biblical faith with the Greek philosophical tradition. We see
it in the gospel of John— "In the beginning was the word,
or 'logos.'"

"Given this convergence [of Biblical faith and Greek
philosophical inquiry], it is not surprising that Christianity .
. . finally took on its historically decisive character in
Europe. We can also express this the other way around:
this convergence, with the subsequent addition of the
Roman heritage, created Europe and remains the
foundation of what can rightly be called Europe."

A return to the Judeo-Christian tradition—Europe's only
hope. You've referred to yourself as a "Christian atheist."
What do you make of that?

SEGMENT
FIVE, CONT'D: A quotation and a vignette:

> The quotation from, once again, the *Strange Death of Europe*: "Promise throughout their lifetimes that the changes were temporary, that the changes were not real, or that the changes did not signify anything, Europeans discovered that in the lifespan of people now alive they would become minorities in their own countries."
>
> The vignette, if that's the word: Back in the nineteen-seventies the British journalist Malcolm Muggeridge—and Muggeridge was convinced even then that our civilization was collapsing—used to say that he had come to think he stood in something of the position of a Roman in the fifth century, watching what he loved come to an end. Augustine, for instance, watching the fall of Rome from across the Mediterranean in North Africa.

Augustine still led a good and impressive life—so much so that he comes down to us as Saint Augustine.

If you're right that it's all ending, you're still a young man. What will constitute a well-lived life in coming years? How much fighting and how much resignation?

Douglas Murray, author of the *Strange Death of Europe* and the *Madness of Crowds: Gender, Race and Identity*, thank you.

For *Uncommon Knowledge*, the Hoover Institution, and Fox Nation, I'm Peter Robinson.

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